Luna, crown jewel of GSIS museum, unveiled today

Story on Page A4

Ramadan: Time to show Muslims love peace

By Samira Ali Gutoc

MUSLIMS all over the world start fasting today, Wednesday, after the declaration of ulamas (religious leaders) sighting of the moon on Tuesday. Others started fasting Tuesday following other religious leaders' declaration.

"Fasting is a time to show the Christians that we Muslims are truly

RAMADAN/ A18

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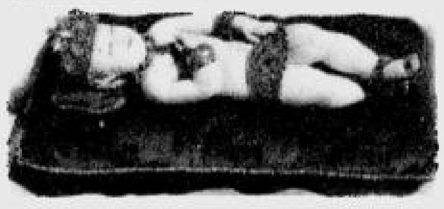
WHAT'S INSIDE



HAVE YOU SEEN THIS CHILD?
Missing: An image of the Baby Jesus, "Sto. Niño Dormido" (sleeping child) in solid ivory. Jaime Laya donated it to the National Museum where it was stolen two months ago. *(Story on Page A26.)*

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph

Wednesday, November 6, 2002 ★★ 62 pages / 5 sections / vol. 17 / no. 331 P15

website: www.inq7.net

100 Jemaah Islamiah agents in Mindanao

US wants to include MILF rebels on blacklist

By Carlito Pablo

AMID a US plan to blacklist the Moro Islamic Liberation Front as a terrorist group, the MILF has pledged to go after a hundred Jemaah Islamiah (JI) and al-Qaida operatives in Mindanao.

This was according to Norberto Gonzales, presidential adviser for special concerns.

He said yesterday that he had told MILF military chief Ibrahim Murad about the US plan to blacklist the MILF because of its alleged links to Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida terrorist network and the Southeast Asian militant group Jemaah Islamiah.

Gonzales, who serves as a "back-channel" peace negotiator with the MILF, said he and Murad had agreed to help each other.

"They (MILF leaders) promised to help us arrest the suspected links of al-Qaida and Jemaah Islamiah in the South," he added.

The MILF, according to Gonzales, "is more than willing to provide concrete proof that it's not a terrorist group by helping us root out terrorists in the country."

In a separate interview on Tuesday, MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu confirmed his group's offer to cooperate in the government's antiterror drive.

100/ A19

HOLDING her own among her peers at the Asean +Japan Summit in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, President Macapagal gets the attention of Japanese Prime Minister Koizumi. The Southeast Asian nations wrap up their talks today. AP

Asean to hold summit in Bali next year

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia—Southeast Asian leaders yesterday ended an annual summit dominated by terrorism concerns with a strong symbolic counterterrorism measure.

They agreed to meet next year in the Indonesian holiday island of Bali, where terrorist bombs last month killed nearly 200 people, mostly Western tourists.

During the two-day summit, the 10 leaders of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations put aside their usual genteel rounds of golf to talk tough on terrorism, a decision which underlined the Asean grouping's seriousness, said Kao Kim Hourn, an adviser to the Cambodian Foreign Affairs Ministry on Asean issues.

"Given the timing of the meeting, the recent issues in Bali (and) what's happening in the Philippines, there is a sense of urgency, a sense of needing to move this region forward," he said. "That's why you see lots of delicate issues being discussed and delicate agreements being reached."

One of the delicate agreements was the non-binding Code of Conduct governing the Spratlys issue, which President Macapagal-Arroyo said last night would bring "peace of mind" to the region. In a press briefing last night, the President said she was proud the Philippines was responsible for the signing of the landmark agreement.

"The document should give

ASEAN/ A18

GMA slams US, West for travel advisories

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

PHNOM PENH (via PLDT)—President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday joined her Asean counterparts in rebuking the United States and other nations for warning their citizens against traveling to Southeast Asia.

The President said tourism in the region had severely declined although "the Asean countries are more than ever working together to protect our tourist destinations from terrorist attacks."

On the other hand, she thanked

GMA/ A20

Gloria now Angel's 'lola'

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

"SHE was calling Mikey's name as the pain worsened," a source close to the Macapagal-Arroyo family told the INQUIRER about the labor pains of Angela Montenegro-Arroyo.

But her husband, Pampanga Vice Gov. Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo, was not around for the birth by Cesarean section on Nov.

GLORIA/ A18

Not Anna and King, but Mega, Gloria

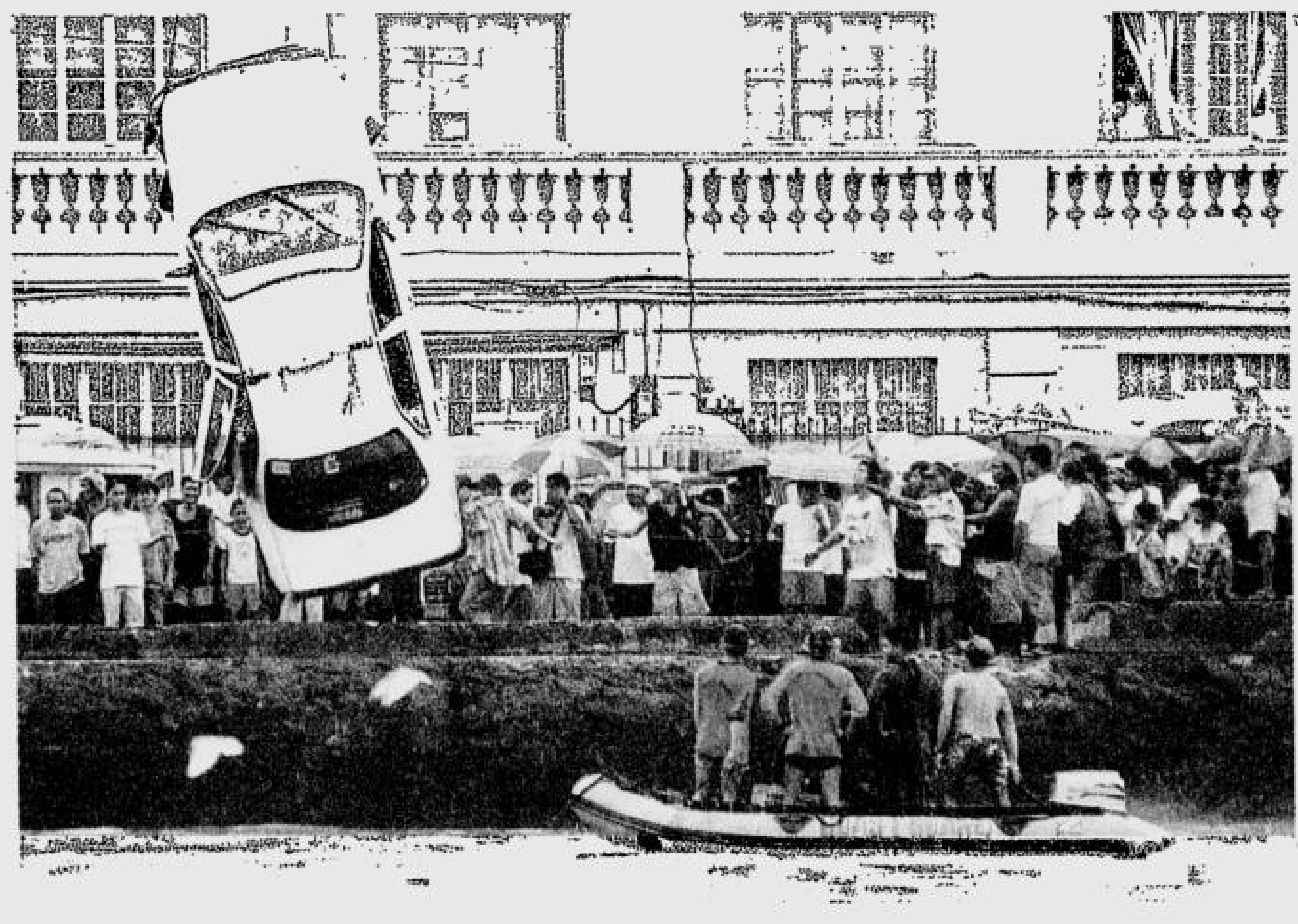
PHNOM PENH, Cambodia—He could have danced all night.

King Norodom Sihanouk, Cambodia's 80-year-old monarch, swept Southeast Asian leaders off their feet at a palace banquet Monday night, dancing and singing like, well, another king from another country.

Instead of teacher Anna come to teach royalty in old Siam, however, the king's partners were Mega of Indonesia and Gloria of the Philippines.

NOT/ A20

I COULD HAVE DANCED ALL NIGHT



TO CATCH A THIEF
To save his life from a robber, who took his day's earning of P900 and held a gun to his head, taxi driver Medici Hernandez decided to drive straight into the Pasig River near the Jones Bridge. Just before Hernandez swam to dry land, he kicked the robber out of the taxi. The suspect has yet to be found. The Coast Guard retrieved the taxi yesterday. ***(Story on Page A5.)***

ERIK ARAZAS

Ople denies restrictions on EU visas

By Norman Bordadora and Carlito Pablo

FOREIGN Secretary Blas Ople yesterday denied that the European Union was preparing to impose restrictions on Filipino applicants for Schengen visas as a result of the Macapagal administration's efforts to establish the Philippines as a bulwark of the US war on terrorism.

Ople, however, admitted that citizens of the Philippines, Indonesia and Malaysia wanting to visit

OPLE/ A20

Coup plotters plan December putsch

By Fe Zamora
INQ7.net
and Carlito Pablo

SANGLEY POINT, Cavite—People seeking to oust President Macapagal-Arroyo are said to be recruiting soldiers belonging to at least three Army divisions, the Special Operations Command, the Philippine Marines, and an Air Force strike wing for a power grab either this month or the next.

An INQ7.net source in the intelligence community said his unit had been "monitoring" reports, mostly coming from the Army headquarters in Fort Bonifacio in Makati about the "recruitment."

The military intelligence officer identified the three Army divisions being eyed by the coup plotters as a source of men and hardware as the 2nd ID in Tanay, Rizal, led by Maj. Gen. Efren Abu, the 5th ID in Isabela led Maj. Gen. Alvarado, and the 7th ID in Nueva Ecija led Maj. Gen. Alberto Braganza.

The source said soldiers from the Special Operations Command in Bulacan, the Philippine Marines in Fort Bonifacio, the 5th Strike Wing and the Special Operations Wing, both of the Philippine Air Force, "were also being enjoined" to join the coup.

COUP/ A18

Defensor rides slow speedboat to Sangley

By Fe Zamora
INQ7.net

SANGLEY POINT, CAVITE—Somebody up there must have wanted to give Gen. Benjamin P. Defensor, Armed Forces of the Philippines chief of staff, a message.

Defensor was on his way from the Philippine Navy headquarters beside the Cultural Center of the Philippines on Roxas Boulevard to the Philippine Fleet headquarters here when the engine of his speedboat conked out.

"They were tinkering with the engine and I thought, maybe they just want to say something?" said Defensor, who is set to retire on Nov. 18—12 days from now. He was named AFP chief on Sept. 4.

With him on the speedboat were Adm. Victorino Hingco, flag officer in command of the Philippine Navy; Rear Adm. Ruben Domingo, commander of the

DEFENSOR/ A18

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Luzon, Visayas and Northern Mindanao will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms becoming widespread rains over Bicol region and Eastern Visayas. The rest of Mindanao will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/11/06/02

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Partly Cloudy

Gloria urges Asean to put up oil stockpile

By Dona Pazzibugan

PHNOM PENH (via PLDT)—Warning of a likely global oil shortage, President Macapagal-Arroyo urged other Asean leaders to put up an oil stockpile in the region.

She made the call on the second day of the three-day Asean Leaders' Summit.

The proposed stockpile would involve the 10 Asean nations—the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore, Brunei, Vietnam, Burma, Laos and Cambodia—as well as China, South Korea and Japan.

During the Asean dialogue with Japan, Ms Macapagal supported the regional oil stockpile proposed by Japan in September.

Uncertainty was then great in the oil-producing Middle East after the United States threatened to go to war again with Iraq.

"The setting up of an Asean regional oil stockpile should be studied carefully since a possible oil shortage is likely to affect stability in the region," Ms Macapagal said.

The Philippines has offered the former US naval base in Subic, Zambales, as the site for such an oil stockpile.

Asean, Japan to form bigger free trade area

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia—A day after Southeast Asian nations signed a deal with China to create the world's largest free trade area, in terms of population, the same countries agreed to create a bigger one, in terms of gross domestic product, with Japan.

Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and the leaders of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations agreed to work on a framework to develop the free trade zone, to create an economy worth at least $4.9 trillion, during a two-hour conference held after the two-day Asean summit.

"Now we are partners who can walk together and advance together," Koizumi said.

Less firm

But summit observers noted that the Japanese agreement was less firm than the China deal, which aims to create a $1.2 trillion free trade area embracing 1.7 billion people by 2015 at the latest.

Observers said negotiations to set up the Japan-Asean deal are not as advanced as the group's dealings with China, and Koizumi was playing catch-up. The Japan-Asean pact is only at the stage of agreeing to develop a framework.

"China really wanted the free trade zone deal to leave Japan out in the cold and that's what they've got. It's purely political," said one expert on Asean. "Japan is now fighting a rearguard action."

Koizumi has said Japanese policies have long placed weight on Asean, and that Tokyo wants to promote trade and investment. But skeptics note Koizumi announced his trade proposal two months after China and Asean agreed last November to work toward their free trade agreement within 10 years and say Japan's plans stem largely from a desire not to be bested.

"Already Japanese industry isn't in a position to boost investment strongly in the region," the Asean expert said. "And China is moving that way."

No competition!

"I do not subscribe to this theory that China is a competitor," Koizumi said last Sunday, adding that China's closer ties with Asean should be taken as an expression of the enthusiasm of the communist giant for the market economy.

"We must take this as a chance for new economic expansion," he said.

But for Tokyo, burdened with a stagnant economy and virulent opposition from one of the most strongly protectionist farm lobbies in the world, an agreement will be easier said than done.

Japanese officials deny any hint of competition with China, saying the gains of one are gains for all.

Contrasts between the two are sharp. China's economy posted year-on-year growth of 8.1 percent in the July-September quarter, while Japan had 2.6 percent growth, its first in five quarters, in the three months to June. Japan's economy shrank 1.3 percent in 2001/2002.

"East Asia plays an important role in the global economy," Koizumi said after signing the "economic partnership" pact yesterday. "Whether we can compete with the European and North American trade blocs depends on us."

Few details about the accord, proposed by Koizumi in January, were provided. Japan and the Southeast Asian nations pledged to seek closer financial, tourism, and science and technology ties within 10 years. It will include "elements of a possible free trade area," the agreement said.

'Two-track' approach

It leaves the door open for Japan to seek separate free-trade agreements with individual Asean members in a "two-track approach." Japan has signed a bilateral free trade pact with Singapore and is seeking similar deals with Thailand, the Philippines, South Korea and Mexico. Indonesia and Malaysia have also expressed interest in creating bilateral free trade agreements with Japan.

Asean, founded in 1967, comprises Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Burma, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

At the Asean summit, Singapore Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong also proposed a European Union-style single economic market for the regional grouping by 2020, with zero tariffs and liberalized trade. *AP, AFP and Reuters*

Gloria to pay homage to communist icon

PHNOM PENH (via PLDT)—Back home, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo treats communists as terrorists. But in the next few days she will not be only talking business with them, she will also pay homage to one of the world's communist icons.

Ms Macapagal starts her two-day state visit to Socialist Republic of Vietnam. She left Phnom Penh yesterday morning after attending the two-day Asean summit.

At the Vietnamese capital of Hanoi, she will first meet with the Filipino community. Then she will hold lateral talk with Vietnamese President Tran Duc Luong. She is also scheduled to meet with Prime Minister Phan Vai Khai as well as the chairman of the National Assembly Muyengu Van An.

One of the highlights of her visits is her visit to the headquarters of the Communist Party of Vietnam. There she will sit down with party chair Nong Duc Manh for an hour of discussion.

Another highlight is when she pays homage to the late Vietnamese President and Communist leader Ho Chi Minh on the second day of her state visit.

She will visit the late Vietnamese president's mausoleum in Hanoi for a wreath laying ceremony.

She and members of the Philippine delegations will also view the body of the late president.

After the wreath laying ceremony, she will fly back home to Manila.

Ho Chi Minh, fondly called by the Vietnamese as Uncle Ho, unified Vietnam under communist rule in the early 1970s. He led the war against the US from the northern city of Hanoi. At that time, most of Vietnam was under communists rule with Hanoi as a capital while South Vietnam was controlled by the United States with capital in the former Saigon. North Vietnamese forces led by Ho Chi Minh eventually defeated the US. Since then Vietnam has been under communist rule. Saigon was renamed Ho Chi Minh City.

Following her trip to Mexcio, the United States, Cambodia and Vietnam, Ms Macapagal will be cooling her heels for three weeks before she goes off on another foreign trip.

She and First Gentleman Miguel Arroyo will visit Japan from Dec. 2 to 5, according to the Japanese foreign ministry yesterday.

During their stay, the Arroyos will meet with Japan's emperor and empress.

The President will also hold talks with Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi to discuss various regional problems.

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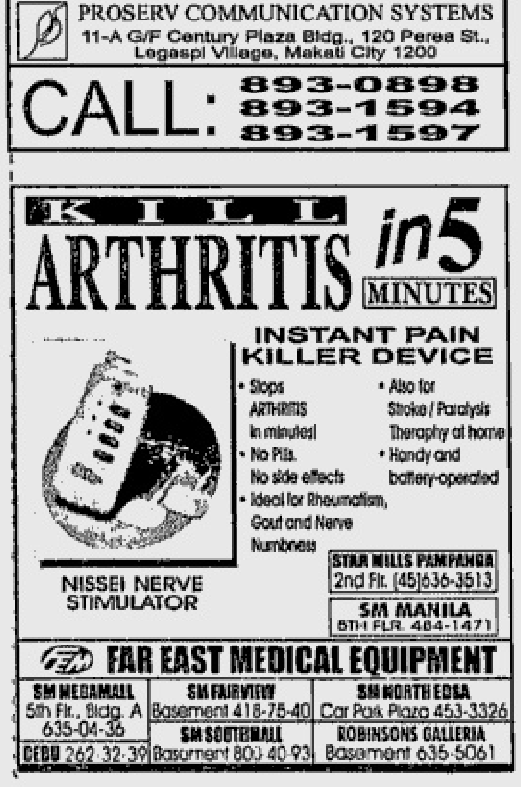
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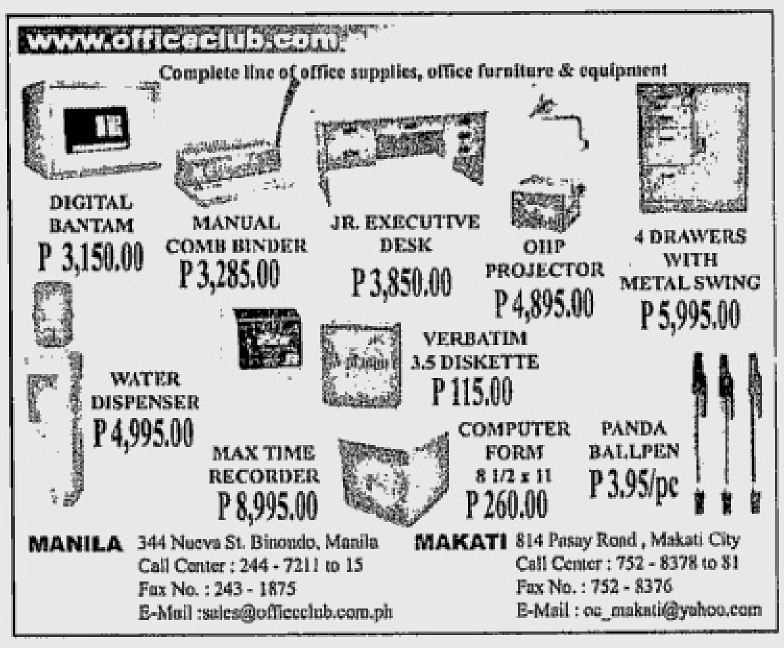
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'DUMMY FLAG CARRIER'

Japan airline flies RP flag, says solon

By Christine O. Avendaño

FOR THE PAST six months, a Japanese-controlled cargo airline has been operating illegally as the country's official flag carrier, carrying cargo from the Philippines to Japan, to the detriment of the national interest.

Because of this, Southern Leyte Rep. Aniceto Saludo Jr., yesterday urged Malacañang and civil aviation authorities not to renew the application of the CLA Air Transport Inc., for an extension of its temporary operating certificate (TOC). In the first place, he said, the certificate was illegally granted to the airline last February.

The temporary permit of CLA expires today.

"There is nothing to extend," Saludo said in a phone interview. "How can you extend a non-existent right?"

Saludo said he plans to deliver a privilege speech on the issue next week when Congress returns from a two-week break.

In a phone interview and in a statement he issued, Saludo disclosed that CLA got a TOC through a resolution by the Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB) led by then Transportation Secretary Pantaleon Alvarez that was approved by President Macapagal-Arroyo in February.

This TOC designated CLA as the official flag carrier to carry international cargo from the Philippines to Narita airport in Japan from Feb. 6 to Nov. 6.

But Saludo said that the President was apparently "misled" into granting the temporary authority to CLA as he noted that the CAB resolution was signed only by Alvarez, DOTC Assistant Secretary Adelberto Yap and member Albero Lim.

He also said that when CAB approved the temporary permit to CLA, it required its ratification by the full CAB in its next meeting.

Anti-dummy violation

But Saludo said CAB executive director Manuel Jose merely forwarded the approval of the CAB resolution to the Department of Foreign Affairs and then to Malacañang instead of than having it ratified by the CAB.

That's why Saludo sought for the prosecution of CAB and CLA officials behind "a conspiracy to circumvent the Constitution and a sellout of the national interest."

He said that he was "morally convinced" Japanese nationals have control of the cargo firm, in violation of the Constitution that requires Filipinos to own majority stock of a corporation and in violation of the anti-dummy law.

The government had denied the application of CLA for an extension of its TOC in 1999 because it was found to have violated the constitutional requirement of 60-40 percent ownership in favor of the Filipinos. The cargo airline had 51 percent ownership by Filipinos over the 49 percent of Japanese investors.

CLA, however, applied for an extension again after it said it had restructured its ownership.

Saludo said the CLA presented documents that showed it has 61 percent Filipino stockholders and 39 percent Japanese nationals.

But he noted that its incorporation documents and bylaws show that its board is made up of four Japanese and four Filipino directors, plus one more Filipino director to be nominated by the Japanese group. This he said gives the Japanese control of the board and the company.

Airlines to tackle security woes

ASIA'S top airline executives will address security concerns and uncertainty due to terrorism at a regional aviation meeting in the country next week, the Association of Asia Pacific Airlines (AAPA) said yesterday.

AAPA director Richard Stirland said the meeting, to be held in Cebu City, will include discussions on the sector's recovery following the terror attacks.

"The region's aviation sector has certainly outpaced the rest of the world in recovering from last year's disaster," Stirland said in a statement. "Now we are faced with other challenges which we hope to get through with proper planning." Philippine Airlines (PAL) president Avelino Zapanta noted this year's meeting comes at a time when there is a great turmoil in the global airline industry.

"This is an opportune time to take stock and discuss issues confronting us," Zapanta said. "Recovery beckons, but uncertainty lingers." PAL is the host of this year's two-day conference beginning Nov. 14. *AFP*

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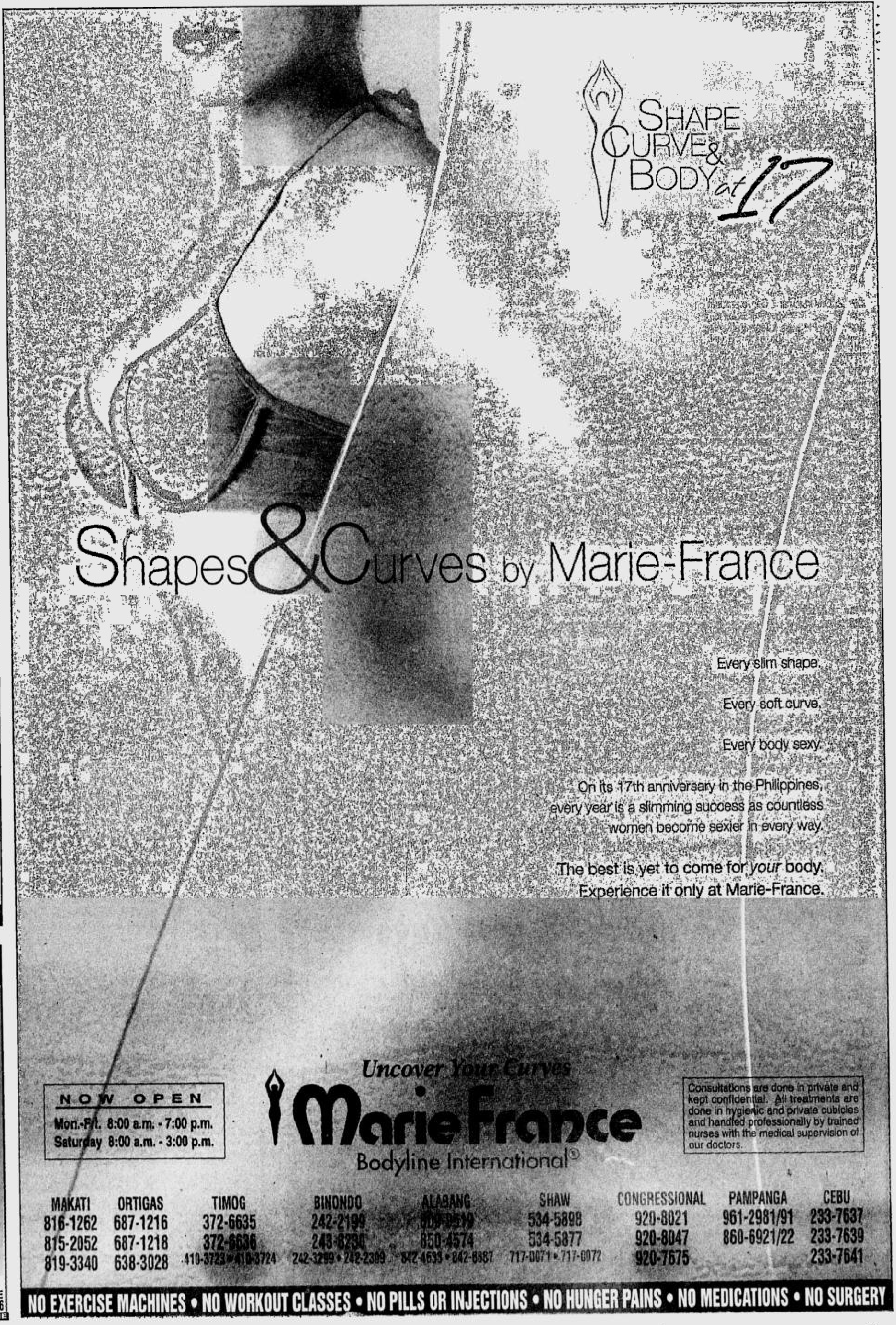
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RP bans California poultry imports

THE PHILIPPINES has banned the importation of poultry products from California due to an outbreak of Newcastle disease, Agriculture Secretary Leonardo Montemayor said yesterday.

"We have banned poultry imports from the United States, but only from California," Montemayor told a news conference, adding that it was due to an outbreak of Newcastle disease.

The Philippines in January suspended imports of poultry productions from the US state of Pennsylvania over another virus outbreak. That ban is still on, an official from the agriculture ministry said.

The United States is one of the Philippines' biggest supplier of poultry products. In the first 10 months of this year, the Philippines imported around 10,000 tons of poultry, of which 5,250 tons came from the United States, officials said.

Other poultry suppliers are Canada, Australia and Brazil.

Reuters

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Luna, crown jewel of GSIS museum, unveiled today

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

THE MOST famous painting in the country nowadays will be unveiled today to 60 guests at its new home at the museum of the Government Service Insurance System on Roxas Boulevard.

Then tomorrow, the public can view the 110-year-old "Parisian Life" painted by national hero Juan Luna in its special room at the GSIS Museum, GSIS president and general manager Winston Garcia said.

It will be the first time in more than a century that the controversial painting, rendered in oil in 1892, will be open to the public. It had been kept in the family of its original owner, Dr. Ariston Bautista Lin, until it was presented and sold at an auction in Hong Kong on Oct. 27.

"This is now the most famous and undoubtedly the most expensive painting in the country. This is a very valuable piece of our heritage," Garcia proudly proclaimed.

Viewing of the painting will be free of charge. GSIS officials say the gesture can help make Filipinos better appreciate their history and heritage.

Eric Zerrudo, curator of the 3,000-sq. m. GSIS Museum, said the public could visit the museum from Tuesday to Saturday, from 8 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Aside from the Luna painting, the public can view the museum's collection of 150 paintings of other renowned Filipino painters.

Nilo Racimo, GSIS vice president for public affairs, said the GSIS Museum has nine Amorsolos, 30 Mansalas, 24 Alcuazes and numerous works of contemporary artists.

But "Parisian Life" will be the museum's "crown jewel," Garcia said.

The "Parisian Life" will hang in a "Luna Room," set up just for the painting, on the second floor of the GSIS headquarters at the reclamation area in Pasay City.

Zerrudo said historical notes will be placed on several panels around the room, including the events of 1892 when the painting was made and information about the historic personalities depicted in the painting.

Luna himself is shown in oil painting as well as Jose Rizal and Dr. Ariston Baustista Lin. Christie's auction house described the depiction as the "last gathering of great Filipinos on the eve of momentous events" in Paris.

Luna reportedly made the painting months before the three returned to the country and etched their niches in the nationalist turmoil at the time which led to the 1896 Philippine revolution against Spain.

There will also be a feature of Bautista's ancestral house in Quiapo where the painting has stayed with generations of his clan.

The house built in 1863 is now a shrine called Bahay Nakpil Bautista.

GSIS officials said reports of the INQUIRER and other newspapers will be put on display alongside the painting so that the public can review the controversy which stemmed from the decision to have it sold and its acquisition by the GSIS.

"All this controversy is part of history," Garcia said.

Zerrudo said the museum would leave it to the the public to make its own judgment about the painting and the GSIS move to bid for it.

"To be truthful about it, GM Garcia only learned that a Luna painting was on sale from an INQUIRER report," said Racimo.

He said he and Garcia were at the time on their way to a meeting in Davao when Garcia thought about acquiring the painting for the GSIS Museum.

Garcia was personally on hand in Hong Kong to bid for "a piece of Filipino history." He got the work for P46 million, which a group of government employees and a number of legislators was too much and represented a misuse of GSIS resources.

Zerrudo said the painting would first be "presented" today to the representatives of the Nakpil clan, Bautista Lin's heirs.

Racimo said the three Nakpil sisters, who have talked to the INQUIRER, were invited to the occasion for sentimental reasons.

Francisca Nakpil-de Lange, 96, Mercedes Nakpil-Zialcita, 88, and Caridad Nakpil Santos Viola, 84 are the surviving daughters of Katipunan composer Julio Nakpil and Gregoria de Jesus, Katipunan muse and widow of Andres Bonifacio.

The childless Bautista couple left the painting in their ancestral home where Julio and his brother Ramon lived with their respective families.

A descendant of Ramon Nakpil sold the painting as his inheritance despite the position by the Nakpil sisters that the painting belongs to the entire clan.

Wounded RP eagle rescued

By Gerald Lacuarta

AMIANAN, a 2.5-foot high Philippine eagle, fights for its life today as it undergoes surgery to remove a bullet lodged in its left chest.

The bird was rescued on Oct. 25 by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) after it was reportedly caught in a pig trap and put up for sale.

Initial examination revealed a superficial wound on its right wing. The bullet, possibly from a .22-caliber gun, was discovered by x-ray last Monday.

Up till yesterday, while under observation at the DENR's Ninoy Aquino Parks and Wildlife Nature Center in Quezon City, Amianan wasn't feeding well. In fact, its gender hasn't been determined because it has been so "stressed," the caretakers have not been able to conduct a more thorough physical checkup.

The owner of the pig trap laid on Mt. Susong Dalaga, in San Mariano town, Isabela, was identified as "Mr. Wangit." He allegedly tried to sell the wounded bird at first, but later turned it over to the DENR Community Environment and Natural Resources Office in Palanan, Isabela, where it received first-aid treatment.

AMIANAN: Fighting for life

On Oct. 31, members of the Philippine Wood Producers Association (PWPA) based in Isabela, brought Amianan to the DENR's Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau (PAWB) Wildlife Rescue Center inside the Ninoy Aquino Park, for further treatment.

PWPA has pledged financial support for the bird's rehabilitation

Presenting Amianan to the media yesterday, Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez sought public support and protection for all Philippine eagles. Alvarez gave the wounded bird its name, which means "North," in Ilocano.

More than anything else, Alvarez said, it is the massive destruction of Philippine forests that has endangered the Philippine eagle.

According to the DENR, a pair of mating eagles needs 40 to 50 square kilometers of forest area where it can feed on snakes, monkeys, wild pigs, flying lemurs, squirrels, snakes, bats and other wild animals. But Philippine forests—covering an area of 14 million hectares some 40 years ago—have been extensively denuded, and less than 20 percent remains.

Also known as monkey-eating eagle or Pithecophaga jefferyi, the species is one of the two largest raptors, or birds of prey, in the world, the other one being the Harpey's Eagle of Central America.

National bird

Declared National Bird of the Philippines during the administration of President Fidel V. Ramos, the eagle is fast dwindling in number. Studies show that there are less than 200 in the wild at this time, while about 50 are held captive in various breeding facilities in the country.

Struggling to protect the eagle in the face of overwhelming odds are several international treaties as well as Philippine laws, the latest of which is Republic Act 9147 or the Wildlife Resources Conservation and Protection Act of 2001, which prohibits the "trading, collecting, hunting, or possession of wildlife, especially threatened species such as the Philippine eagle."

Violators—such as the person who fired the gun that put a bullet in Amianan's chest, if he will ever be caught—face a maximum imprisonment of up to six years and/or a fine of up to P1 million.

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Cabbie drives robber into river

By Philip C. Tubeza

DRIVER Medici Hernandez, 51, drove his taxicab into the Pasig River before dawn yesterday after a man who identified himself as a policeman held him up in Manila.

Hernandez, of Sawata Riverside C-3 Caloocan City, managed to get out of the taxi and swim ashore while the robber disappeared, police said.

Authorities are still trying to find out if the suspect drowned. They are looking for his body.

Hernandez said the robber was drunk. He described him as 24 to 27-years-old, 5'4" to 5'5" in height, and wearing a shirt and jeans.

The victim told investigators that he was driving his IVC taxi, a white Toyota Corolla, (with plate number PWE 710), when the suspect flagged him down in front of Isetann Department Store on C.M. Recto Avenue.

The passenger told the victim to take him to Del Pan.

Hernandez said the suspect then lighted a cigarette inside the air-conditioned taxi.

The victim said he scolded the suspect, who did not take the scolding lightly.

The drunken man allegedly introduced himself as a policeman, pulled out a 9 mm pistol, announced a hold-up, and took Hernandez's earnings worth P900.

Murky waters

Afraid for his life, the driver said he decided to drive his taxi into the river.

Hernandez said he thought of driving the cab into the wall, but this would not have stopped the robber from shooting him.

The complainant was driving along Muelle Del Rio, near Jones Bridge, when he suddenly swerved and plunged his taxi into the river's murky waters.

Hernandez said kicked the suspect before he got out of the taxi and swam ashore. He then asked for assistance from the police.

While the authorities continued to search for the robber hours later, they recovered the taxi and hauled it off the river at the back of the Bureau of Immigration.

Clarissa to climax gov't case vs Erap

By Volt Contreras

SHE'S returning to the stand, this time to help state prosecutors close the plunder case against ousted President Joseph Estrada "with a bang."

Former Equitable-PCIBank executive Clarissa Ocampo, whose damning testimony two years ago electrified the Estrada impeachment trial, is set to pin down anew the actor-turned-president Monday next week before the Sandiganbayan.

Government lawyers yesterday asked the anti-graft court to subpoena Ocampo for the Nov. 11 and 13 hearings.

Ocampo shot to national prominence on Dec. 22, 2000 when she told the Estrada impeachment trial that she was just "a foot away" when the accused, at the time the President, signed as "Jose Velarde" in connection with a secret bank account allegedly containing his ill-gotten wealth.

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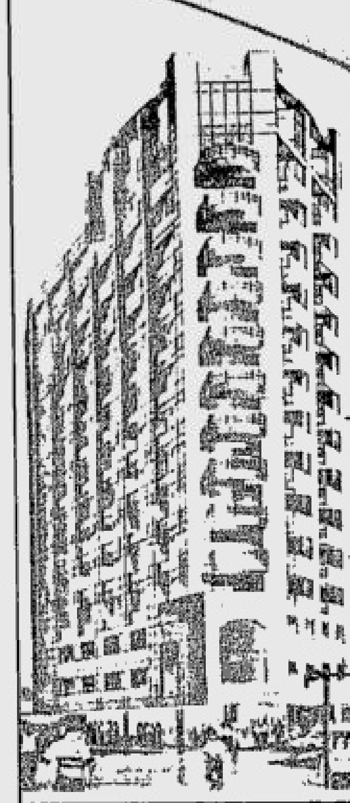
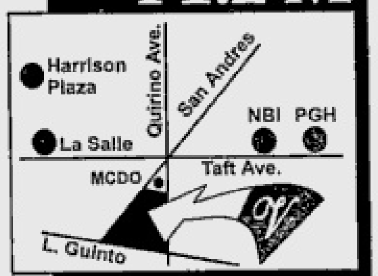

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LUCIO TAN DAY IN GUAM
Guam Gov. Carl Gutierrez (2nd from left) presents to Filipino business tycoon Lucio Tan his appointment as ambassador-at-large of the US island-territory on Nov. 4, which was declared Lucio Tan Day. In simple rites at the Palace of the People, Tan was also inducted into the Ancient Order of the Chamorri in recognition of his investments and socio-economic contributions to the terrirority. Also in photo are Lt. Gov. Madeleine Bordallo (left), Guam First Lady Geri Gutierrez and Mrs. Carmen Tan (extreme right).

Legarda seeks travel ban on pyramid scam leaders

By Cynthia D. Balana

SENATE Majority Leader Loren Legarda yesterday asked the Bureau of Immigration to place the officers of Multinational Telecom Investors Corp. (Multitel) in its hold-departure list to enable them to answer charges that they had duped thousands of Filipinos of some P5 billion in investments.

Legarda also wanted Multitel to explain the use of her photo and supposed message of endorsement in the promotional brochures the company had handed out to prospective investors in its pyramiding operation.

Multitel also allegedly use the photos of Sen. Edgardo Angara, Speaker Jose de Venecia, Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay, former Speaker Arnulfo Fuentebella and Manila Hotel President Arnulfo Acedera in endorsing its investment scheme.

"I have not authorized any company, much less Multitel, to use my photo nor have I given it any endorsement. I'd say that this is another form of name-dropping," she said.

Shady schemes

Legarda said that she will never support shady schemes, knowing that lives and dreams have been destroyed by such practices.

Multitel was being investigated by the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Department of Trade and Industry on suspicion of running an illegal pyramiding operation.

Trade and Industry Secretary Mar Roxas has also denied having endorsed Multitel, contrary to reports in the media.

"Perpetrators of investments fraud should not be allowed to escape with their loot," Legarda said. "If the officers of Multitel have nothing to hide, then they should face their investors, and open their books to investigators."

The Multitel office at the Enterprise Center 2 building in Makati was said to have been closed. The company was headed by Rosario Baladjay of 309 San Antonio St., Ayala-Alabang in Muntinlupa. Investors were afraid that she might have already left the country.

Because of this, Legarda warned the public not to fall prey to investment scams.

'Too good to be true'

She said people should realize that when someone promises them the "moon and the stars," it can only be a hoax.

"When an investment scheme is too good to be true, people should exercise caution. Most likely, they will be left holding the bag," she said.

According to the senator, the proliferation of pseudo-investment practices like pyramiding, telemarketing fraud and vertical investments arise from people's natural attraction to get-rich-quick schemes and the inability of the government to crack the whip on operators of these schemes.

She said the SEC, DTI and the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas should intensify their campaign against such illegal schemes.

Such schemes, Legarda said, include:

- Pyramiding, wherein investors who get in early take their profits from investors who join later. At some point, no new investors can be found and as a result, the last investors, who are at the bottom of the pyramid, will lose their money.

Ponzi scheme

- Ponzi schemes, which resemble pyramid schemes where there is no true product or service being offered in exchange for the investment. It operates by using funds from many investors to pay the first few. As the number of investors grows and the supply of potential investors dwindles, the Ponzi scheme collapses under the pressure of meeting the promised interest payments.
- Telemarketing fraud in which companies engaged in this scam are dubbed as "boiler rooms" because they use high-pressure tactics over the phone to make fraudulent investment offerings.
- Affinity group fraud consist of actions involving breach of trust and fraud on religious, ethnic and professional groups by members of these groups or persons claiming to provide assistance to these groups like overseas contract workers.
- High-tech products and services - such illegal offerings target unsophisticated investors with promises of high profits with no risk by investing in the latest hi-tech products and services like Internet service providers and cyber shopping.

Immigration cracks down on Indon illegals in south

By Blanche S. Rivera

SOME 12,000 Indonesians and an undetermined number of Malaysians illegally staying in Mindanao are being urged to have themselves "regularized" to avoid arrest.

The Bureau of Immigration has deployed field personnel and alien control officers not to arrest, but to conduct an information drive for the undocumented aliens to secure registration papers.

Immigration Commissioner Andrea Domingo yesterday said local governments and representatives of the Indonesian consulate in Davao were assisting in the campaign.

Civil registrars have been advised to help Philippine-born Indonesians who wish to register but have yet to secure birth certificates.

The undocumented Indonesians were reportedly based mostly in South Cotabato, and Saranggani provinces, and General Santos City. Many of them have lived in the country for several generations and have been assimilated into Philippine society, engaging in local businesses and marrying Filipinos, the bureau said.

Registration fee for the Indonesians have been fixed at P1,060 instead of the former rates that were based on the registrant's length of stay in the country.

Domingo said this was because many of the aliens expressed willingness to legalize their stay as permanent residents, but could not afford the cost.

She said the friendly approach was on account of the bond between the Philippines and Indonesia as members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

However, Domingo also admitted that the undocumented Indonesians had been an irritant in relations between Manila and Jakarta.

On Sunday, five Indonesian men were nabbed after failing to show travel documents as they were unloading 30 containers of crude oil, four containers of kerosene and several boxes of floor tiles from a motorboat. *With reports from AP and AFP*

NBI doubts if NPA did Abra mayor in

THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation doubts Tineg, Abra mayor Clarence Benwaren was killed by the New People's Army, an NBI source said.

The investigator said the suspects' escape was clumsily planned, leading to the death of gunman Edberto Amoncio, 26, during a gunfight after he was cornered by the police.

Cernan Carandang-Manalang, 22, of Barangay Paciano Rizal in Bay, Laguna and the alleged driver of the suspect's get-away vehicle, was also arrested by responding policemen.

The investigator said NPA assassins usually "blend in and disappear" with the crowd after a hit. They noted that in the case of Amoncio, the lawmen even found his identification card.

The source said that Benwaren's killing on Tuesday in Calauan, Laguna did not fit the "usual pattern" of an NPA hit. The investigators found out that the killers even rented the van.

The NPA's Augusto Begnalen Command has claimed responsibility for the killing.

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DOJ ends Nida probe; Strunk to be charged

By Michael Lim Ubac

BLANCA

WITH the failure of the primary suspect to rebut the parricide charges lodged by the government, the Department of Justice yesterday terminated its preliminary investigation of Nida Blanca's murder.

Roger Lawrence Strunk, Blanca's husband, failed to make the Monday deadline for him to submit his counter-affidavit, which amounted to a "waiver of his right" to rebut the charges, according to Senior State Prosecutor Archimedes Manabat.

"We gave him and his lawyers enough time," Manabat said. "We gave him the chance to clear his name. We have no choice now but to terminate the proceedings."

The filing of criminal charges against Strunk now appeared imminent.

Tomorrow is the first anniversary of the actress' murder. According to an official in the National Bureau of Investigation, Blanca's daughter Kaye Torres has complained about the slow pace of the case.

"But I think it was fast," the official said. "There are many other cases that took longer to file."

Manabat heads the panel assigned to conduct the preliminary investigation of the murder. The panel members are State Prosecutors Mark Jalandoni and Aida Macapagal.

Instead of a counter-affidavit, which Strunk lawyer Alma Mallonga had been promising to submit during all the DOJ hearings held since July, a "compliance" document was submitted on Monday.

Manabat said the "compliance" could not be equated to a counter-affidavit but that the panel would consider it in the resolution of the case.

In the document, Strunk's lawyers from the Siguion Reyna Montecillo & Ongsiako law office adopted the consolidated affidavit of his co-respondent, Philip Medel Jr., submitted on Sept. 12.

The document also manifested to the panel that Strunk's sworn statement submitted during the first preliminary investigation on Dec. 12, 2001, would "suffice to rebut the baseless and malicious accusations contained in the July 17 joint complaint against him."

Strunk's lawyers said the American, who is in the United States, had met difficulty in having his extended counter-affidavit authenticated by the Philippine Embassy in California.

They promised to submit the affidavit as soon as the embassy issued the required certificate of authentication.

But the DOJ panel, which had extended the deadline several times since August, said it could not wait any longer.

Blanca was found dead in her car at the Atlanta Centre Building in San Juan on Nov. 7, 2001. *With a report from Philip C. Tubeza*

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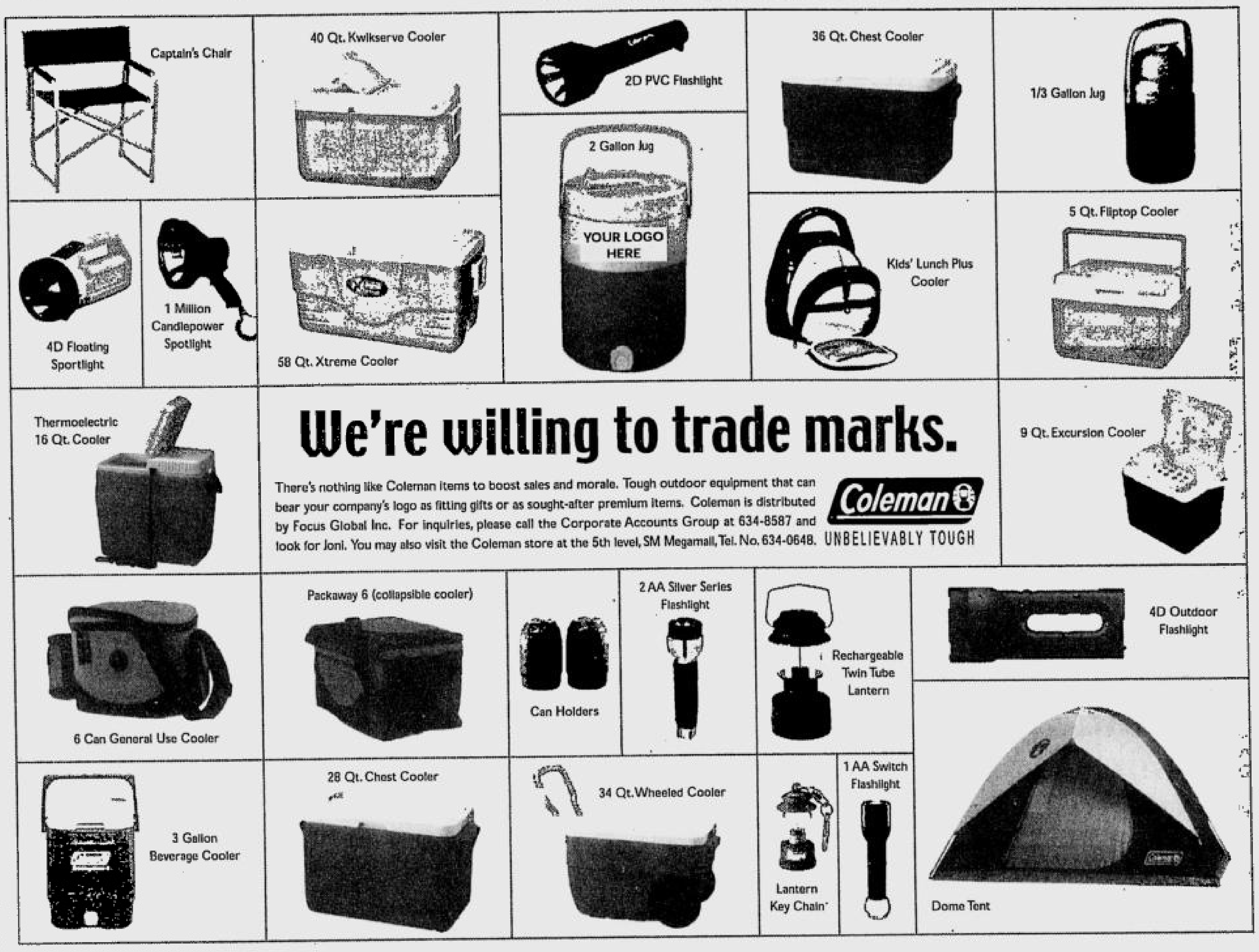

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
Vol. 17 No. 331
ISSN
0116-2642

OPINION

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph **website:** http://www.inq7.net

THE PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER, INC. has its business and editorial offices at
•Chino Roces Ave corner Yague and Mascardo Sts., Makati City
•P.O. Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office 1263 Makati City
•Our telephone numbers are 897-8808 connecting all departments
•Editorial Fax 897-4793 / 897-4794 •Advertising 897-4807
•Circulation 527-3342 / 527-3348 / 528-0183 / 528-0186 and 528-0213 / Fax: 528-02-34.

Publisher **ISAGANI YAMBOT**
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Suspect or guest?

EDITORIAL

EVERYWHERE she goes these days, President Macapagal-Arroyo hardly speaks about anything else but winning the war against terrorism. At the Apec summit in Los Cabos, Mexico, last month and now at the Asean summit in Phnom Pehn, Cambodia, Ms Macapagal has stressed the need for international cooperation in combatting the menace of terrorist organizations.

Perhaps it's time she brought the same message home and especially to the officials whose duty it is to prosecute the war against home-grown terrorists. Not only is the campaign faltering, as witness the spate of bombings in Zamboanga City and Quezon City, even some of the campaign's modest successes are being frittered away by carelessness or plain ineptitude on the part of law enforcers. It's bad enough that the Abu Sayyaf has been decimated and neutralized only in military press releases, but the situation is not helped any when the few terrorists who are captured easily make their way to freedom.

Three weeks ago, Abdul Basit Usman, the principal suspect in the bombing of Fitmart Mall in General Santos City last April 21, escaped from the Philippine National Police mobile group's headquarters in Alabel, Sarangani, where he was being held. Usman didn't have to do a Houdini to pull off the escape. He just asked permission from his jailers to go to a nearby spring to wash his clothes, and they readily agreed. Then he just walked away, and was never heard from since then.

Usman was not just any two-bit lawbreaker. The GenSan bombing left 15 persons dead and 60 others wounded. Another suspect now in police custody, Ustadz Noor Muhammad Umog, said in a sworn statement that he had hired Usman to make the bomb and detonate it near the mall. Usman himself admitted that it was he who had planted the bomb. He is also suspected of having set off the bombs that exploded at the GenSan pier and city hall more than two years ago. In other words, Usman was fit to be bound in chains and confined inside a 12-inch thick concrete vault, and yet his custodians let him go by his lonesome to wash his clothes in a spring, like an innocent maiden.

Now if this is not gross incompetence, we do not know what it is. If this is not a case of infidelity in the performance of one's duty, we don't know what constitutes such an offense. The regional police director, Chief Supt. Jose Dalumpines saw it as at the very least a case of dereliction of duty and ordered the relief of the provincial police chief and the chief of the mobile force. But Director General Hermogenes Ebdane, after getting over his embarrassment over another sensational escape, said Dalumpines erred when he relieved the officers under him.

Why? It appears that there was no valid court order for Usman's arrest. The charge sheet accusing Usman of illegal possession of deadly weapons and explosives had been sent back to the police by the regional trial court judge since the accused was not identified by his real name. So the police had no legal basis for keeping him in jail. "If we detained him, we would be charged with human rights violation," Ebdane said.

It sure sounds nice to hear the PNP chief say something like that. But Usman had been in police custody since his arrest in June this year. Did Ebdane make a belated discovery that Usman had his rights too only after his escape? Or was Usman staying as a guest in the police barracks all the time?

If Usman was not properly charged in court, whose fault was it? Is nobody going to answer for that stupid mistake?

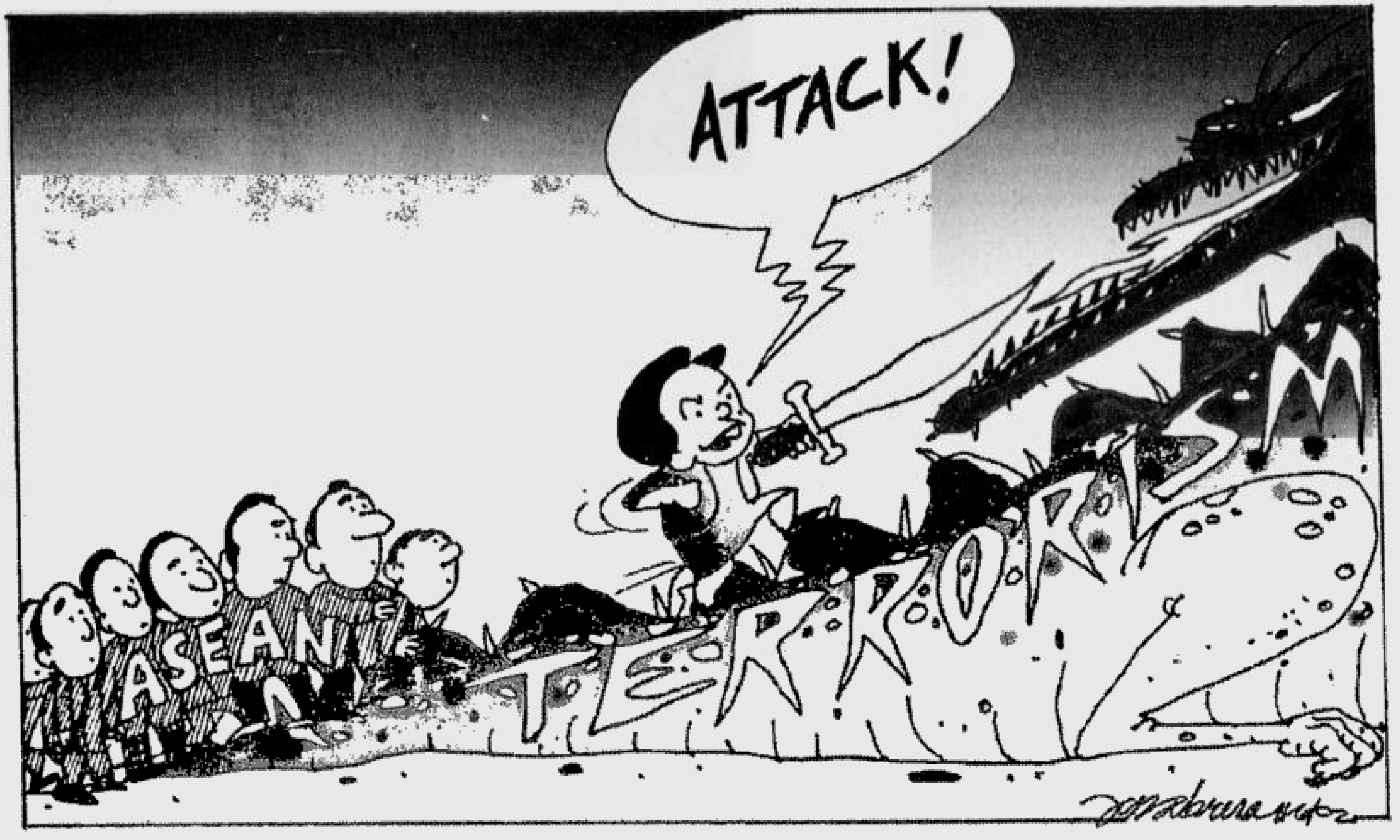
If the police cannot keep suspected terrorists in jail, why bother to identify and catch them in the first place? Given this attitude of our police, how does the administration propose to win the war against terrorism?

Face of fear

FOREIGN COMMENT

AFTER WEEKS of terror, we now know what the face of fear looks like. It's the face of John Allen Muhammad, a former soldier. And it's the face of John Lee Malvo, his suspected teenage accomplice. The two have been arrested and charged as the men who came to be known under one frightening name—the Beltway Sniper—responsible for killing 10 people and wounding three others, mostly around Washington, D.C.

One of the wounded was a neighbor of ours here in Brevard County...Thankfully, he is still with us. Ten others were not so lucky, and for their families the grief and loss from this latest episode of senseless violence in our society will last as long as they live. *Florida Today (Melbourne, Florida)*



Enforce law on firecracker manufacture strictly

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

PHILIPPINE National Police Director General Hermogenes Ebdane has suggested designating certain areas, such as public plazas, as "firecracker zones" where revelers can explode their pyrotechnic devices this New Year. This is to allow Filipinos to give vent to their desire to explode firecrackers, a cultural aberration that we find hard to give up. Presumably, exploding firecrackers out of these zones would be prohibited and anybody caught doing that would be arrested and prosecuted. This, Ebdane said, is an antiterror move—to prevent terrorists from using the New Year's Eve firecracker explosions as a cover for their own bombings.

A good suggestion—theoretically. The question is: Can it be implemented? I presume the "firecracker zones" would be used only during New Year's Eve, when the revelry reaches its peak. Or would it be every day, from what date to what date? What if the terrorists explode their own bombs outside of those dates?

Presumably, citizens who have bought their own firecrackers would go to the public plazas to explode them. Or those who have none would go there to watch others throw away their money in the form of exploding firecrackers. It saves the have-nots a lot of money but at the same time satisfies their craving to see and hear firecracker blasts. And it probably will prevent fires and injuries from wayward fireworks.

But how can Ebdane's policemen prevent or arrest people exploding firecrackers in their own backyards or on the streets in front on New Year's Eve itself? Will there be enough room in our jails for all those who can't resist the urge to explode firecrackers? Will there be enough policemen to round them up? And will that really prevent terrorists from exploding their own bombs?

Wouldn't it be easier and simpler if the police enforce the law in the places where it all begins, the firecracker factories? Wouldn't it be easier to prevent the manufacturers of oversized firecrackers rather than stop them from being exploded after they have been manufactured and sold to the public?

We have a law limiting the size of firecrackers to the *triangulo* and to sparklers, Roman candles and other fireworks. But this law has never been implemented by the police properly. Prohibited mini-bombs like *pla-pla*, thunder, super lolo, etc., continue to be manufactured and sold under the very noses of the police and local government units. When some stores or factories are raided and pyrotechnic devices are confiscated (to show that the police and LGUs are doing something), these ultimately find their way back to the market, oftentimes sold by the policemen themselves.

So can't Ebdane's PNP enforce more strictly the law on the manufacture and sale of pyrotechnics? This way, only the harmless firecrackers will be manufactured and the mayhem that accompanies every New Year's Eve celebration will be prevented. And the terrorists cannot use the big firecrackers to camouflage their own bombs. This will not prevent the PNP from having Ebdane's "firecracker zones." In fact, the zones and the firecracker law can go together.

Better still, stricter enforcement will teach our citizens to respect and obey our laws. The way the firecracker law is hardly enforced at present has taught, and continues to teach, our citizens to disobey our laws. The way it is violated left and right by almost everybody, one would think there is no such law at all.

And that has always been the way with many of our laws, be it against squatting, or traffic violations, or the throwing of garbage. We spend so much money to pay our legislators to make laws and ordinances but we don't obey what they churn out. Why do we waste our scarce tax money that way?

* * *

Mandaluyong Mayor Ben Hur Abalos was the subject of good-natured ribbing at yesterday's Tuesday Club at the Edsa Shangri-La. The mayor had filed charges against sexy actress Diana Zubiri for posing in skimpy clothing on the Shaw Boulevard flyover and causing a traffic jam.

In his defense, Abalos said he received a report that there was "*bomba*" at the flyover, so he dispatched a police team to look into it. They did look at the bomb, and enjoyed what they saw. Little did he know that it was the shapely bombshell Diana Zubiri.

* * *

This Christmas, many people would understandably be leery of accepting gift packages. You never know what's inside those packages. It could be a bomb. Years ago, a chief of police of Malabon was killed when one such gift bomb delivered to his hotel room exploded.

To avoid scaring people with your gift packages—and saving you the trouble of shopping for gifts—why not just send gift donations to charity organizations in the name of the people you want to send gifts to? You can donate an amount to, say, the Philippine Animal Welfare Society (PAWS), which needs such donations very badly, in the name of your friend. PAWS will then send a Christmas card and some small giveaways to the friend, announcing that a donation had been made in his name by so-and-so. Our family has been doing that for several years now. Why don't you do that, too?

PAWS adopts abandoned and unwanted pets, takes care of them, and then puts them up for adoption by families who care for them. It has an animal shelter near the Ateneo campus in Quezon City. It needs financial help.

* * *

Speaking of charity work, the Women's Board of St. Luke's Medical Center will hold a bazaar at Greenhills on Nov. 9 and 10. There are many bazaars during the Christmas season, but proceeds from this one will go not into private pockets but for the care of indigent patients at St. Luke's.

Natural expectations

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I HAD a talk with a German last week, and he said he was vastly amused by something I wrote a while back about the German elections. Specifically, the part where I asked their political analysts a question or two about cheating and they found it a laughing matter. True enough, he laughed, they've never had a problem with electoral fraud. The concept of a Namfrel was completely superfluous, if not outrageous. Everyone assumed the votes would be counted as cast.

The only time they had a problem with cheating was when the East was reunited with the West, the East, with its bureaucratic way of doing things, being more prone to cheating. The results in one Eastern town had to be nullified, but the episode was minor and brief, and was promptly corrected.

It's not just cheating in elections that they find an almost alien concept. It is cheating in public office, for those who win. Or what we more commonly call graft and corruption. Public officials do cut corners here and there, and use their power to broaden or defend family fortunes, but they do not pillage as brazenly or epically as they do here. The thought of using taxpayers' money for private ends is anathema to both the public and government itself.

It's more or less the same situation in other parts of Western Europe and the United States. And in the more developed Asian countries like Japan and Korea. They also expect votes there to be counted as made. Of course, cheating happens every now and then—if the Democrats in the United States are to be believed, Al Gore won the last elections, as it was impossible for him to have lost in Miami—but it is the exception rather than the rule. And though public officials are not beyond dipping their hands into the public treasury, the retribution when they are found out is swift and harsh. The slightest whiff of scandal has been enough to make Japanese prime ministers resign. And two former South Korean prime ministers are currently doing time for it.

We normally attribute this to the fact that other countries are able to punish cheaters and grafters. That is of course true. The routine enforcement of sanctions is vital, to drive home certain truths, such as honesty is the best policy, public service is a public trust and crime does not pay. True enough, what makes crime or perfidy or corruption prosper in this country is that the culprits are never punished. Or worse, they are rewarded by being given higher positions, made commencement speakers and regarded as important individuals—*malalaking tao*—whose acquaintance, or better friendship, people want to make, or have.

But I think it's far more than this. What prevents cheating and corruption, or keeps them within bounds, is not just the fear of the law but the weight, or inertia, of culture, tradition, public opinion, call it what you will. Or what we may call the "law of natural expectation." That candidates will not cheat in elections and that public officials will not rob the country blind are what everybody expects—and therefore demands. People who do not comply with that are "naturally" visited not just by legal sanction but by public opprobrium. You don't comply, you're through, whatever else the law does with you.

It is the *force* of that expectation that makes it happen. Not watchdogs, not judges, not the penal system. That is really what the phrase "the majesty of the law" means. The law does not exist out there, a figure hovering over us in kingly robes with a roving eye, it pulses inside our minds, or hearts, suffusing us with its prickly presence.

One way to think of it is to look at the difference between living in a time of war and a time of peace. You live in a time of war, your son's death will remain oppressive to you but you will learn to accept it as bound to happen. You live in a time of peace, the same thing will explode in your mind with utter gratuitousness and you will forever reject it. The first is within the range of possibility, however unsaid, the other is not.

Doubtless an extreme and dramatic case, but it says something about the power of natural expectations. You expect candidates to act respectably, or reasonably so, and expect public officials to be honest, or reasonably so, and you will reject with the force of your being the utter gratuity of them behaving otherwise. You will find the thought unthinkable. You will find the concept alien.

The opposite is true as well. There is a power, or a self-fulfilling dynamism, in naturally expecting candidates to cheat, or public officials to steal. It creates within itself the seeds of tolerance, and acceptance. You keep saying "So what else is new?" in the face of horrendous scams like the President Diosdado Macapagal Boulevard—as do many people in an effort to sound fashionably cynical—and those things will keep happening again and again. You keep telling people who are still stoked to outrage by these things, "Why are you so angry, why don't you look at the brighter side of things?"—as do many people who have gotten tired of bad news and demand to hear only good ones—and the sun will never shine on this earth.

Worse, you turn all these things into jokes, text or otherwise, and you turn the perpetrators from reprehensible criminals into lovable rogues. I thought that was also the downside of the "Eraptions" of yore. While at this, there is a difference between the way David Letterman makes jokes about Imelda's shoes and the way we do. The first drips with derision, ours waxes with merriment.

The day we learn to laugh only at the absurdity of our candidates needing to cheat to win and our public officials needing to steal to live is the day we stop *them* from having the last laugh on us.

Three key concerns of foreign investors

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

THE MEETING of the Philippine International Board of Investors with President Macapagal-Arroyo on Oct. 9 to 10 was not too much of a "secret." The public sessions, where key members of the Cabinet made presentations at the Shangri-La Hotel in Makati, on the alleged advantages of the Philippines as an investment destination, and the dinner at the Phil-Am Tower Club could not have been more open. Executives of big Philippine businesses were there.

The presentations by, among others, Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho, Trade Secretary Manuel A. Roxas II, Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon and Presidential Adviser on Job Creation Luis Lorenzo were a reenactment of their international "road shows"—only they were being staged on home grounds this time. They need a reality test.

What is secret is the fact that the foreign advisers, composed of big overseas company executives, after the presentations, met the President twice and voiced their concerns over the drawbacks that discourage investment flows to the Philippines. Their three basic concerns were: fiscal management, corruption, and law and order. Some of the advisers, like former Prime Minister Paul Keating of Australia, did not mince words in telling the President what her Cabinet and her Filipino advisers keep away from her because she does not like to hear bad news.

Their perception of the Philippines was in stark contrast to the picture drawn by the "road show" stars of the administration. The foreign advisers included former US Ambassador Stephen Bosworth, senior adviser to JP Morgan; Maarten van den Bergh, chair of Lloyds TSB Group; Antony Burgmans, chair of Unilever; E. Gerald Corrigan, managing director of Goldman, Sachs & Co.; Sabier de Irala Estevez, chair and CEO of Iberia Lineas Aeraes de España; Maurice Greenberg, chair and CEO of American International Group; Minora Mikohara, chair of Mitsubishi; Laura Tyson, dean of the London Business School; and Dr. Stephen Zuellig, chair of the Zuellig Group.

In what one Cabinet member described as a "strong comment," Keating said that President Macapagal lacked the political will to push her legislative agenda in Congress. He said she needed "firmness" in dealing with Congress and faulted her for not "setting the agenda."

The President blamed Congress, for the propensity of its members, especially the opposition, to play the spoiler's role for the gridlocks in the legislature and the stalling of her economic reform proposals.

Other advisers echoed Keating's views. They recalled that the President had promised reforms and they have been waiting for them to happen.

The President's reply, blaming Congress, of course begged the question. Part of the reason she could not get Congress, including members of the majority and the opposition, behind her agenda is that there is an undercurrent of lack of confidence in her. The general perception in Congress is that all her decisions are meant to enhance her reelection chances in 2004 and that she has not acted firmly to discourage corruption or money-making by some of the people who claim to be influential with her. This perception that she has lost her moral ascendancy was shared by the advisers.

Some Filipino businessmen pointed out that former President Ramos, who had a narrow electoral mandate (24 percent) and whose party held a few seats in the House of Representatives, succeeded in forging a consensus that enabled Congress to pass his legislative agenda.

Law and order was cited as a major deterrent to investment flows, which have slowed considerably during the Macapagal administration. This observation was not music to the ears of Gordon whose campaign to draw tourists to the country by playing up its beaches and resorts rather than its historical monuments (which are systematically being destroyed) is being blasted each time terrorists attack some places in the South or kidnap gangs abduct rich Filipinos or Chinese.

In the presentations and in the sessions of the executives with the President, the officials and the advisers drew different pictures of the Philippines. There was hardly any convergence in the perceptions of the officials and the advisers.

The President listened patiently to the "frank" appraisals of the foreign advisers, disagreed with some of their observations, explained her position and promised to address them. She could not scold them or throw a tantrum at them.

One Filipino executive observed that the advisers were now collecting on her promise to push a reform agenda. The advisers suggested that her reform agenda was faltering on the corruption issue, with some people close to her being widely perceived as taking advantage of their position to seek opportunities to promote private gains.

That the advisers raised their concerns to the President and disregarded the official presentations indicated that the "road shows" are of little help in attracting foreign investment. A local executive pointed out that during presidential visits overseas, she says the right things, is focused and leaves a strong impression of competence. But when she is at home, a different perception emerges: she is seen as losing political control and moral authority and uncertain of her priorities.

As she moves deeper into her presidency, President Macapagal is indicating that her job is too big for her. She is not mastering it; she is being devoured by it.

Thinking Christmas

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

FRIENDS say they realized the Christmas season was nigh when they woke up one early morning days ago and felt a chill in their bones. "When you don't need the aircon anymore to get a good night's sleep, then you know it's the holiday season," one said, paying homage to that brief—too brief—period during the year when our usually tropical climate eases up on the heat and humidity.

For most other people, the holidays are signaled by the airing of Christmas carols on the radio, as well as the countdowns to Christmas that sneak up on you on radio news shows and even the early evening news on TV.

This avid shopper, on the other hand, felt the dreaded imperative of holiday shopping at the first sight of signboards announcing village bazaars and streetside *tiangges*. So far, all we have to show in our home for the fruits of our shopping sprees are a few plastic bags of bargain items and some holiday wrapping supplies, this despite visiting the mecca for *viajeras* that is Bangkok. "And I thought you'd have been done with your Christmas shopping by now!" exclaimed my sister-in-law Coratec, helpfully.

On a visit to Paete and environs over the weekend, touring my brother-in-law Manny and his wife Yoly who are visiting from Florida, we come upon visible symbols of the occasion. Shops are filled with wooden and paper mâché figures and trimmings: stars, angels, Santas, reindeer, teddy bears with fur-trimmed caps and even stockings filled with goodies. We grab an armful, making plans about our décor theme this year.

At a shop filled with religious carvings, my daughter steers me away from almost life-size Nativity figurines, warning me we no longer have room in the house as it is for my collection of *belens*.

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ACTUALLY, moviegoers eager for a taste of Christmas got an early treat with the movie "Nine Mornings," which centers on the Filipino tradition of nine dawn Masses starting from Dec. 15, the Filipinos' way of marking the countdown to Christmas morning.

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The story of a cold-hearted, materialistic yuppie forced to complete the "Simbang Gabi" when his grandmother makes it a condition for his coming into his inheritance, "Nine Mornings" is a story of redemption, even if it is on the surface a love story between the yuppie (Piolo Pascual) and the lovely teacher (Donita Rose) he meets in church.

Having lost his faith when his girlfriend drowned, the young man finds himself unable to connect to anyone on any substantial level. He is cold and demanding of his employees, distant to his friends, and beds women solely for sexual gratification. But with the help of the teacher and a young orphan girl who is her special ward, he realizes what really matters most in life, his eyes opened to the fact that however much he accumulates in life—"I have a car, a condo and a business," he tells his lawyer to sum up his life—it's never enough if none of these outlasts a brief, flashy existence.

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You don't have to attend all nine morning Masses to bring the real celebrant into your celebration of Christmas. There's plenty of room for Him as long as your hearts are open to His presence.

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Hermano Pule

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

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It is both funny and sad that I associate Lucban with food and a fiesta, because Philippine history has been enriched by someone born in Lucban: Apolinario de la Cruz. Better known in our textbooks as "Hermano Pule," De la Cruz led one of the pre-1896 revolts way back in 1841. But I have always associated this hero with Tayabas, his place of death, rather than Lucban, his birthplace. This oversight can probably be explained by the fact that heroes, like saints, are often remembered more for their death than their life. In the case of Hermano Pule, he has been appropriated by Tayabas from Lucban. This explains why there were two commemorations held last Monday in these two towns.

Issues like this are not new in local history. Last Saturday, I brought my father to see the famous pre-historic drawings on a rock shelter, known as the "Angono Petroglyphs." Since this work of art by ancient Filipinos was brought to the attention of the National Museum decades ago by the late National Artist Carlos V. Francisco, it has always been associated with Botong and Angono. There was no problem until boundaries between towns were clearly defined and the rock shelter fell within the jurisdiction of present-day Binangonan. But they cannot rename them the "Binangonan Petroglyphs" without causing confusion, so the Department of Tourism installed an amusing sign of the site that reads, "The Angono Petroglyphs in Binangonan."

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The storyline is simple but familiar to us all. Apolinario de la Cruz was a devout Catholic who wanted to join a religious congregation. He was frustrated to find out these congregrations were not open to native Filipinos. In 1832, together with 19 of his provincemates in Manila, he established the Hermandad de la Archi-Cofradia del Glorioso Señor San Jose y de la Virgen del Rosario, which we all know under the short form, Cofradia de San Jose. As founder of this *cofradia*,he was better known was Hermano Pule. This *cofradia* was nothing new—there were many of them in those times—and it was ignored from 1832 to 1840. By the time church and civil authorities became suspicious that it was a subversive organization, it had a membership of around 5,000 spread throughout Tayabas, Laguna and Batangas.

The group usually had Masses said on the 19th of each month, followed by fellowship that included praying the Rosary, listening to letters from Hermano Pule and partaking of a common meal.

On Oct. 18, 1840, the curate of Lucban, Fr. Manuel Sancho, was requested to say Mass. He refused. Worse, he asked the Guardia Civil to raid *cofradia's* meeting on the 19th, leading to the arrest of over 200 members.

While there was no case and the civil governor ordered the release of the members, Father Sancho and the vicar of Tayabas kept the members in prison. Some were even tortured. Hermano Pule wrote civil and church officials to complain, but his letters were ignored. His request that his *cofradia* be recognized by the authorities were likewise ignored.

In mid-1841, the governor-general went through the rules of the *cofradia* and noticed that Spaniards and *mestizos* could not be accepted as members without the permission of Hermano Pule. He overreacted and ordered that the *cofradia* be disbanded. Members in Lucban and Majayjay were hounded and, to cut a long story short, Hermano Pule assembled the *cofradia* on the slopes of Mt. San Cristobal where he was hailed as the "King of the Tagalogs."

In October 1841, Spanish forces attacked the *cofradia's* camp in Aritao. After 10 days of fighting, hundreds of members lay dead.

Hermano Pule escaped to Sariaya but was eventually captured, tried and shot. His head was placed in a cage and hung on a pole on the road to Majayjay. His hands and feet were cut and likewise hung on posts in the four corners of the province.

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HIGH BLOOD

Ricardo D. Dizon

WE'D also like to know the concerns of the sixtysomething and above, what makes their blood pressure rise or makes them sit back, content that all's well with their world and with themselves. —Ed.

WHEN we were still kids, my two brothers and I were taught to always pray and wear the crucifix or pin a medal of the Blessed Virgin Mary on our undershirt. Mother told us that the religious medals would keep us from harm as we go down the stairs, cross the street, walk in the dark, etc.

You can just imagine how many medals three naughty and restless youngsters lost as we played *patintero* or took a bath. Mother must have anticipated this, because she was always ready with a replacement.

However, when we grew older she stopped supplying us with medals. I do not know how my two brothers felt about it, but the habit stuck with me. Without my medal, I felt as if I was almost naked.

In January 1942, the Japanese Imperial Army occupied Manila. Japanese soldiers swarmed all over the place. Rumors flew that the conquerors were so keen on asserting their authority that for any crime, serious or not, Filipinos were tortured and killed. It was said that some offenders were hanged upside down from a tree, others were forced to drink gallons of water, still others had their nails pulled out, etc.

Filipinos had to bow when they met a Japanese sentry. Out of fear or necessity, many tried to learn Japanese by studying English-Japanese dictionaries. I myself learned to say *Hai, nani desu ka?* (Hello, how are you?), *Kombanwa* (Good morning), *Konichi wa* (Good evening), *Domo arigato* (Thank you very much) and other words and phrases I have now forgotten.

One day, the Japanese issued an order requiring all Filipinos to surrender their firearms, whether licensed or not. They warned that after the deadline, those found in possession of firearms would be punished severely or even executed.

It so happened that a neighbor, a close friend, had a .32-caliber pistol. He did not want to surrender it, and he told me I could have it for free.

A gun for free? Which teenager would refuse such an offer? (I was 19 years old then.) I began weighing my options. Sure, there was an order to surrender firearms, but how would the Japanese know who had a gun? If I buried the gun until the war was over, possibly in a few months, I would then be the proud owner of one.

I wrapped the gun in a thick cloth soaked in oil, put it in a cigar box, and buried it in a clump of banana trees in our backyard

It turned out that the gun did not belong to my friend but to a friend of his. The owner, who was living in Manila, had entrusted it to my friend, thinking it would be safer to hide the gun in Quezon City. A few weeks later, the owner wanted to get back his gun saying he had found a buyer. My friend pretended to look for it in the ceiling of their house and feigned surprise to find it gone.

Of course, the owner did not believe him. He came back the next day with a policeman in tow. My friend panicked when he saw the policeman. All three of them came barging into our house, and the policeman with a nightstick in his hand, began interrogating me in earnest.

What could I do? I led them to the place where the gun was buried and dug it out.

When I was done, the policeman immediately pulled a rope out of his pocket and tied my wrists behind my back. He roughly grabbed my arms and led me to a waiting *calesa*. An aunt who was witnessing the whole proceedings managed to throw me a polo shirt.

The policeman ordered the *kutsero* to proceed to the Japanese Military Police Headquarters near the Rotonda in Sta. Mesa. He was surprisingly gracious enough to button my shirt.

It was about 2 p.m. There was only a Japanese sergeant in the office. He was short, wide, burly and looked really tough. I do not know how the policeman explained everything to the Japanese, but the soldier, with hand gestures, ordered to me to sit on a bench and wait. The policeman left.

I began praying the Rosary, using my fingers to count the Hail Marys. Scary thoughts raced through my mind. Will I be tortured or shot? Will I survive this ordeal?

It was late afternoon when a Japanese officer, a captain, arrived. The sergeant immediately apprised him about my case. The officer merely looked at me and went over the papers on his desk.

After a while, he called the sergeant and gave him some instructions. The sergeant grabbed me by the arm and led me to an adjoining room. The room was large and empty. "My God, this must be the torture chamber!" I said to myself.

The sergeant closed the door and untied my hands. As he began unbuttoning my shirt, I blurted out all the Japanese words and sentences I knew to make him think I was pro-Japanese and a friend. He just kept silent and opened my shirt wide. I closed my eyes, thinking in horror, "This is it. He will bludgeon me to death with his fists!"

A few seconds of terror passed. Suddenly, I felt the Japanese buttoning my shirt again. He grabbed my arm and led me back to the officer. They exchanged a few words. Then the officer faced me and spoke in perfect English, "You are lucky, it is the Emperor's birthday tomorrow. Kneel down and thank God, the Emperor of Japan, and the Japanese Imperial Army, and then go home."

I knelt down and excitedly said aloud, "*Domo arigato*, Emperor of Japan! *Domo arigato*, Imperial Japanese Army! *Domo arigato*, Captain! *Domo arigato*, Sergeant! *Domo arigato*, God!" Then I bowed and dashed outside. I walked as fast as I could, looking back often, fearing they might change their minds and run after me again.

I walked all the way from Sta. Mesa in Manila to Mayon in Quezon City. It was late that night when I reached home. You can just imagine how my mother felt when she saw me. She screamed with joy as she ran to embrace me. Her eyes swollen from crying since her arrival that afternoon, she examined every inch of my body for any sign of torture. There was none. Only the marks of the rope on my wrists were there and I assured her that I had not been harmed at all.

A few days later, some cousins who heard about the incident came to visit me. As I related the whole story, I couldn't help but boast that my knowledge of some Japanese words had saved me.

A cousin pointed at the medal pinned to my undershirt and told me: "There. That is what saved you. Your medal. Those Japanese must be Catholics!"

I was stunned. For the first time, I realized it was my medal, a crucifix, which stopped the Japanese sergeant. He had seen the crucifix when he unbuttoned my shirt.

I could not forgive myself for being so stupid and ungrateful. I even thanked God last. It dawned on me that the medal I was wearing and my prayers saved me from a horrible fate.

To this day, I still wear a crucifix and a medal of the Blessed Virgin Mary hanging from a necklace, forever grateful that my life was spared.

Ricardo D. Dizon, 79, is an architect.

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Three key concerns of foreign investors

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

THE MEETING of the Philippine International Board of Investors with President Macapagal-Arroyo on Oct. 9 to 10 was not too much of a "secret." The public sessions, where key members of the Cabinet made presentations at the Shangri-La Hotel in Makati, on the alleged advantages of the Philippines as an investment destination, and the dinner at the Phil-Am Tower Club could not have been more open. Executives of big Philippine businesses were there.

The presentations by, among others, Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho, Trade Secretary Manuel A. Roxas II, Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon and Presidential Adviser on Job Creation Luis Lorenzo were a reenactment of their international "road shows"—only they were being staged on home grounds this time. They need a reality test.

What is secret is the fact that the foreign advisers, composed of big overseas company executives, after the presentations, met the President twice and voiced their concerns over the drawbacks that discourage investment flows to the Philippines. Their three basic concerns were: fiscal management, corruption, and law and order. Some of the advisers, like former Prime Minister Paul Keating of Australia, did not mince words in telling the President what her Cabinet and her Filipino advisers keep away from her because she does not like to hear bad news.

Their perception of the Philippines was in stark contrast to the picture drawn by the "road show" stars of the administration. The foreign advisers included former US Ambassador Stephen Bosworth, senior adviser to JP Morgan; Maarten van den Bergh, chair of Lloyds TSB Group; Antony Burgmans, chair of Unilever; E. Gerald Corrigan, managing director of Goldman, Sachs & Co.; Sabier de Irala Estevez, chair and CEO of Iberia Lineas Aeraes de España; Maurice Greenberg, chair and CEO of American International Group; Minora Mikohara, chair of Mitsubishi; Laura Tyson, dean of the London Business School; and Dr. Stephen Zuellig, chair of the Zuellig Group.

In what one Cabinet member described as a "strong comment," Keating said that President Macapagal lacked the political will to push her legislative agenda in Congress. He said she needed "firmness" in dealing with Congress and faulted her for not "setting the agenda."

The President blamed Congress, for the propensity of its members, especially the opposition, to play the spoiler's role for the gridlocks in the legislature and the stalling of her economic reform proposals.

Other advisers echoed Keating's views. They recalled that the President had promised reforms and they have been waiting for them to happen.

The President's reply, blaming Congress, of course begged the question. Part of the reason she could not get Congress, including members of the majority and the opposition, behind her agenda is that there is an undercurrent of lack of confidence in her. The general perception in Congress is that all her decisions are meant to enhance her reelection chances in 2004 and that she has not acted firmly to discourage corruption or money-making by some of the people who claim to be influential with her. This perception that she has lost her moral ascendancy was shared by the advisers.

Some Filipino businessmen pointed out that former President Ramos, who had a narrow electoral mandate (24 percent) and whose party held a few seats in the House of Representatives, succeeded in forging a consensus that enabled Congress to pass his legislative agenda.

Law and order was cited as a major deterrent to investment flows, which have slowed considerably during the Macapagal administration. This observation was not music to the ears of Gordon whose campaign to draw tourists to the country by playing up its beaches and resorts rather than its historical monuments (which are systematically being destroyed) is being blasted each time terrorists attack some places in the South or kidnap gangs abduct rich Filipinos or Chinese.

In the presentations and in the sessions of the executives with the President, the officials and the advisers drew different pictures of the Philippines. There was hardly any convergence in the perceptions of the officials and the advisers.

The President listened patiently to the "frank" appraisals of the foreign advisers, disagreed with some of their observations, explained her position and promised to address them. She could not scold them or throw a tantrum at them.

One Filipino executive observed that the advisers were now collecting on her promise to push a reform agenda. The advisers suggested that her reform agenda was faltering on the corruption issue, with some people close to her being widely perceived as taking advantage of their position to seek opportunities to promote private gains.

That the advisers raised their concerns to the President and disregarded the official presentations indicated that the "road shows" are of little help in attracting foreign investment. A local executive pointed out that during presidential visits overseas, she says the right things, is focused and leaves a strong impression of competence. But when she is at home, a different perception emerges: she is seen as losing political control and moral authority and uncertain of her priorities.

As she moves deeper into her presidency, President Macapagal is indicating that her job is too big for her. She is not mastering it; she is being devoured by it.

Thinking Christmas

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

FRIENDS say they realized the Christmas season was nigh when they woke up one early morning days ago and felt a chill in their bones. "When you don't need the aircon anymore to get a good night's sleep, then you know it's the holiday season," one said, paying homage to that brief—too brief—period during the year when our usually tropical climate eases up on the heat and humidity.

For most other people, the holidays are signaled by the airing of Christmas carols on the radio, as well as the countdowns to Christmas that sneak up on you on radio news shows and even the early evening news on TV.

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WHEN we were still kids, my two brothers and I were taught to always pray and wear the crucifix or pin a medal of the Blessed Virgin Mary on our undershirt. Mother told us that the religious medals would keep us from harm as we go down the stairs, cross the street, walk in the dark, etc.

You can just imagine how many medals three naughty and restless youngsters lost as we played *patintero* or took a bath. Mother must have anticipated this, because she was always ready with a replacement.

However, when we grew older she stopped supplying us with medals. I do not know how my two brothers felt about it, but the habit stuck with me. Without my medal, I felt as if I was almost naked.

In January 1942, the Japanese Imperial Army occupied Manila. Japanese soldiers swarmed all over the place. Rumors flew that the conquerors were so keen on asserting their authority that for any crime, serious or not, Filipinos were tortured and killed. It was said that some offenders were hanged upside down from a tree, others were forced to drink gallons of water, still others had their nails pulled out, etc.

Filipinos had to bow when they met a Japanese sentry. Out of fear or necessity, many tried to learn Japanese by studying English-Japanese dictionaries. I myself learned to say *Hai, nani desu ka?* (Hello, how are you?), *Kombanwa* (Good morning), *Konichi wa* (Good evening), *Domo arigato* (Thank you very much) and other words and phrases I have now forgotten.

One day, the Japanese issued an order requiring all Filipinos to surrender their firearms, whether licensed or not. They warned that after the deadline, those found in possession of firearms would be punished severely or even executed.

It so happened that a neighbor, a close friend, had a .32-caliber pistol. He did not want to surrender it, and he told me I could have it for free.

A gun for free? Which teenager would refuse such an offer? (I was 19 years old then.) I began weighing my options. Sure, there was an order to surrender firearms, but how would the Japanese know who had a gun? If I buried the gun until the war was over, possibly in a few months, I would then be the proud owner of one.

I wrapped the gun in a thick cloth soaked in oil, put it in a cigar box, and buried it in a clump of banana trees in our backyard

It turned out that the gun did not belong to my friend but to a friend of his. The owner, who was living in Manila, had entrusted it to my friend, thinking it would be safer to hide the gun in Quezon City. A few weeks later, the owner wanted to get back his gun saying he had found a buyer. My friend pretended to look for it in the ceiling of their house and feigned surprise to find it gone.

Of course, the owner did not believe him. He came back the next day with a policeman in tow. My friend panicked when he saw the policeman. All three of them came barging into our house, and the policeman with a nightstick in his hand, began interrogating me in earnest.

What could I do? I led them to the place where the gun was buried and dug it out.

When I was done, the policeman immediately pulled a rope out of his pocket and tied my wrists behind my back. He roughly grabbed my arms and led me to a waiting *calesa*. An aunt who was witnessing the whole proceedings managed to throw me a polo shirt.

The policeman ordered the *kutsero* to proceed to the Japanese Military Police Headquarters near the Rotonda in Sta. Mesa. He was surprisingly gracious enough to button my shirt.

It was about 2 p.m. There was only a Japanese sergeant in the office. He was short, wide, burly and looked really tough. I do not know how the policeman explained everything to the Japanese, but the soldier, with hand gestures, ordered to me to sit on a bench and wait. The policeman left.

I began praying the Rosary, using my fingers to count the Hail Marys. Scary thoughts raced through my mind. Will I be tortured or shot? Will I survive this ordeal?

It was late afternoon when a Japanese officer, a captain, arrived. The sergeant immediately apprised him about my case. The officer merely looked at me and went over the papers on his desk.

After a while, he called the sergeant and gave him some instructions. The sergeant grabbed me by the arm and led me to an adjoining room. The room was large and empty. "My God, this must be the torture chamber!" I said to myself.

The sergeant closed the door and untied my hands. As he began unbuttoning my shirt, I blurted out all the Japanese words and sentences I knew to make him think I was pro-Japanese and a friend. He just kept silent and opened my shirt wide. I closed my eyes, thinking in horror, "This is it. He will bludgeon me to death with his fists!"

A few seconds of terror passed. Suddenly, I felt the Japanese buttoning my shirt again. He grabbed my arm and led me back to the officer. They exchanged a few words. Then the officer faced me and spoke in perfect English, "You are lucky, it is the Emperor's birthday tomorrow. Kneel down and thank God, the Emperor of Japan, and the Japanese Imperial Army, and then go home."

I knelt down and excitedly said aloud, "*Domo arigato*, Emperor of Japan! *Domo arigato*, Imperial Japanese Army! *Domo arigato*, Captain! *Domo arigato,* Sergeant! *Domo arigato*, God!" Then I bowed and dashed outside. I walked as fast as I could, looking back often, fearing they might change their minds and run after me again.

I walked all the way from Sta. Mesa in Manila to Mayon in Quezon City. It was late that night when I reached home. You can just imagine how my mother felt when she saw me. She screamed with joy as she ran to embrace me. Her eyes swollen from crying since her arrival that afternoon, she examined every inch of my body for any sign of torture. There was none. Only the marks of the rope on my wrists were there and I assured her that I had not been harmed at all.

A few days later, some cousins who heard about the incident came to visit me. As I related the whole story, I couldn't help but boast that my knowledge of some Japanese words had saved me.

A cousin pointed at the medal pinned to my undershirt and told me: "There. That is what saved you. Your medal. Those Japanese must be Catholics!"

I was stunned. For the first time, I realized it was my medal, a crucifix, which stopped the Japanese sergeant. He had seen the crucifix when he unbuttoned my shirt.

I could not forgive myself for being so stupid and ungrateful. I even thanked God last. It dawned on me that the medal I was wearing and my prayers saved me from a horrible fate.

To this day, I still wear a crucifix and a medal of the Blessed Virgin Mary hanging from a necklace, forever grateful that my life was spared.

Ricardo D. Dizon, 79, is an architect.

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Media helping terrorists achieve their goals

COMING at a time when successive terror attacks jolted the nation, the call of President Macapagal-Arroyo and Zamboanga City Mayor Maria Clara Lobregat for the citizenry to get on with their lives and not to be intimidated by terrorism showed their understanding of the need to calm our people amid the violence and not allow the terrorists to achieve their objective of sowing panic and chaos.

On the other hand, watching "Magandang Gabi, Bayan" last Oct. 19 convinced me that even prominent media personalities (in this case, a senator of the republic!) sometimes do not know their responsibilities in the unified campaign against terrorism. By repeatedly running videos of the bomb blasts in Zamboanga, the ensuing confusion of fear-stricken shoppers and the "*karumal-dumal*" carnage as evidenced by footage of mutilated and mangled bodies, "Kabayan" Noli de Castro could well have been the terrorists' propagandist. In the final tally, six people died, more than 140 were injured and millions of others were traumatized.

It is precisely this sensationalized projection of widespread fear and anxiety that arouses the terrorists' fervor and whets their desire to devise even more cruel and destructive methods. In effect, "MGB" aided the terrorists by amplifying their message to the public.

Lest I be accused of being a supporter of its rival network, let me say that I also did not appreciate that Oct. 21 "Frontpage" reporter who thought she was doing us a great service by boarding the bus that had been bombed in Quezon City and pointing "exactly" at where the victims were seated, which direction the dead body flew, etc. That bus was the crime scene, and her "exclusive" entry to a supposedly cordoned area again showed how media intrusions complicate already difficult investigations.

Notwithstanding the inevitable war among networks, I hope people in the media will be more circumspect in their actions. Instead of highlighting the damage and despair or racing for exclusive juicy footage, it would be to the best interest of the public if the media instead sent the message of individual vigilance, collective responsibility and community cooperation as deterrents to the achievement of the terrorists' evil intentions.

—RONALD ALCUDIA
rjsalcudia@yahoo.com

No cuts made in DepEd budget

THIS refers to a news item published in the Oct. 24 issue of the INQUIRER, titled "Tutors, students hit solon for delay in budget."

Please allow me to clarify some points. The expected reforms in the Department of Education's infamous automatic salary-deduction schemes have not been fully realized. Worse, there appears to be a conspiracy to restore the exploitative lending practices against our public school teachers.

I deny delaying and effecting cuts in the DepEd's 2003 budget. Records will show that the budget hearings were deferred on the motion of another congressman. Moreover, Congress has not made any cuts on any department's budget at this stage. Raymond Palatino, president of the National Union of Students of the Philippines, has described as malicious and untrue the quote attributed to the NUSP. The Alliance of Concerned Teachers (ACT), another organization that was misquoted, has issued a statement supporting payroll reforms in the DepEd.

To protect the net take-home pay of the public school teachers, the 2002 General Appropriations Act (GAA) prohibited payments, through salary deductions, of the billion-peso onerous loans from private lenders and the distribution of collection incentives to DepEd officials and employees. A minimum take-home pay, net of all deductions, of P3,000 a month per employee was also established to correct excessive deductions that resulted in zero pay.

As chair of the oversight committee on the implementation of Section 36 of the 2002 budget, I was deeply alarmed that the loan balances which are still being serviced by the DepEd payroll system have not decreased as expected. Records show that service fees collected from all lenders from January to July 2002 totaled P140.754 million as against only P186.516 million in all of 2001. This means that the volume of loans has remained or even grown higher despite the measures to rescue the teachers from onerous loans. The Government Service Insurance System has been asked to increase its loan exposure and has actually offered to take out existing private lender portfolios to no avail.

What we see here is a clear resistance to reforms which are meant to protect the welfare of our teachers. Congress received the 2003 budget proposal with Section 37 (Service Fees and Incentives) brazenly restored. This is precisely the section that was deleted in 2002.

—JESLI A. LAPUS,
representative,
Third District, Tarlac

IF you have any complaints, grievances or suggestions about the treatment of news and photos by the Inquirer, you may write to the Readers' Advocate, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue, corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, City of Makati or send a fax to Nos. 897-4793, 897-4794, or e-mail readersadvocate@ inquirer.com.ph

Writers of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

New curriculum needs reexamination

WHEN the ad "Miseducating the Nation" caught my eye, I thought it was just another innovative advertising ploy. But after failing to find the product being sold, I realized that it was a brilliant way of getting a message across. And the message, as it turned out, was quite explosive. I suspect that Antonio Calipjo Go might have been forced to adopt this strategy as a last resort.

If the new Basic Education Curriculum is indeed defective—and I am fully convinced by Go's arguments—it is incumbent upon the new education secretary to order an immediate investigation of this matter. He must convene a group of truly committed and dedicated people to do two things: First, identify all the errors in each component of the BEC to determine the magnitude and extent of its deficiency or defects. For instance, the Secondary English Language Curriculum which was cited by Go allegedly contains 540 errors, excluding typos. This is way too much! It should therefore be completely overhauled or totally scrapped. Second, correct, improve or reform those curricula.

There's a lesson somewhere in this for us. We must never allow a politician to sit at the helm of the Department of Education again for the simple reason that it is in the nature of politicians to think of their own interests first and foremost. The politician who is really willing to serve the people who elected him to power simply does not exist. We must never again place the future of our children in the hands of ambitious people with obviously political agendas.

—TRACY EMMANUEL S. ULEP,
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Merryhomes Phase II,
Zabarte Avenue, Novaliches,
Quezon City

The Mysteries of Light

I REFER to your article on the Holy Rosary last Oct. 27. It is possible that many people are not aware that the main link between the Old Testament and the New Testament in the Holy Bible is the perfect fulfillment of over 300 ancient prophecies in the different facets of the life of Jesus. The Old Testament is made up of 45 books written by many different authors over thousands of years before the birth of Christ, and 35 of them contain these prophecies.

Many people may also not be aware that the Holy Trinity of God the Father God, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit is the supreme author of the Holy Rosary who has imbued each of its 15 mysteries with events that present the entire panorama of Jesus' virgin birth, His ministry, death, resurrection, ascension and the spreading of the Christian faith until St. John's revelations. Adding word pictures of the events in Jesus' life reveal part of the mysteries making them understandable.

I think of the Holy Rosary as a perfect ring or circle, the symbol of perfection. When Pope John Paul II decided to include the Light Mysteries, it was the perfect diamond embedded in the perfect ring, thus becoming a trillion times more brilliant because the core of the old prophecies fulfilled in the New Testament is contained mostly in Jesus' ministry. When praying the new Rosary, one can feel the flow of graces that enraptures and fuses one with God, bringing tears of love, joy and fulfillment.

The Catholic faithful have probably noticed that 14 of the 15 mysteries are about Jesus, with the Blessed Mother in the background, just as the moon is to the sun.

I hope that in making my personal thoughts public I have been able to turn the faithful praying the Rosary into witnesses viewing the events of Jesus' life and having a personal relationship with Jesus, feeling His extreme pain and Mary's heartaches and experiencing oneness in God's bosom.

—GRACIA R. JOVEN,
Mira-Monte Subdivision,
4328 Lucban, Quezon

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE
BUREAU OF INTERNAL REVENUE
Quezon City

OFFICIAL NOTICE

TO : ALL TAXPAYERS and OTHERS CONCERNED

SUBJECT : REVISED PAYMENT SYSTEM FOR BIR TAXES

With the objective of enhancing the convenience and the security of paying internal revenue taxes through the Authorized Agent Banks, the Bureau of Internal Revenue issued Revenue Regulation 16-2002 the main provisions of which are the following:

I. EFFECTIVITY:

The effectivity date of the regulation and the announcements detailed herein have been moved from November 4 to November 19, 2002 to provide taxpayers and others concerned ample preparation time for this Revised Payment System and to insure its smooth implementation

II. MODES OF PAYMENT:

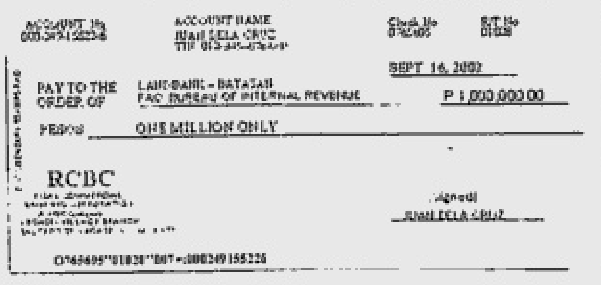
Taxpayers have four (4) modes to choose from in making payment to any of the Authorized Agent Banks (AABs) operating in the Revenue District Office with jurisdiction over the taxpayer. These are

1. Over-the-counter-Cash Payment.– Refers to payment of tax liabilities to authorized agent banks in the currencies (paper bills or coins) that are legal tender in the Philippines. The maximum amount allowable under this mode of payment is ten thousand pesos (P10,000).
2. Bank Debit System.– Refers to the system where a taxpayer, through a bank debit memo or advice, authorizes withdrawals from his/its existing bank accounts for payment of tax.
3. Checks.– Refers to a bill of exchange or Order instrument drawn on a bank payable on demand. The accomplishment or writing of the check must strictly conform with Part III and its acceptance is subject to the limitations of Part IV hereof.
4. Electronic Filing and Payment System (EFPS).– This system which is currently undergoing expansion and enhancement is for now only available to large taxpayers and accredited volunteers.

III. PROPER ACCOMPLISHMENT OF CHECKS

In the issuance and accomplishment of checks for the payment of internal revenue taxes, as illustrated below, the taxpayer shall indicate in the space provided for **"PAY TO THE ORDER OF"** the following data: (1) presenting/collecting bank or bank where the payment is to be coursed and (2) FAO (For the Account Of) Bureau of Internal Revenue as payee; and under the **"ACCOUNT NAME"** the taxpayer identification number (TIN).

An example of a correctly accomplished check appears as annex 'A' below:



ACCOUNT No
ACCOUNT NAME
JUAN DELA CRUZ
SEPT 16, 2002
PAY TO THE ORDER OF LAND BANK - BATASAN
FAO BUREAU OF INTERNAL REVENUE
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PESOS ONE MILLION ONLY
RCBC
JUAN DELA CRUZ

IV. SPECIAL BIR-BANK DEPOSIT SLIP

When the Mode of Payment is Cash, Debit System or Check but not for EFPS, the taxpayer must accomplish a special BIR-BANK DEPOSIT SLIP FORM. This deposit slip must be presented to the bank teller together with the cash payment, debit application form or check as the case may be and the tax declaration, for machine validation. The deposit slip and tax declaration when machine validated shall constitute the Acknowledgement Receipt. There will no longer be a separate Acknowledgement Receipt.

V. OTHER PROVISIONS:

Taxpayers are advised to read Revenue Regulation 16-2002 dated 11 October 2002 in its entirety. The complete regulation was published in the 15 October issues of the Manila Bulletin and Philippine Daily Inquirer.

Copies of the Regulation may also be obtained at the Taxpayer Information and Education Division Telephone No. 924-3245. It may also be viewed at the BIR website: www.bir.gov.ph

GUILLERMO L. PARAYNO JR
Commissioner

Negros DAR chief denies blaming top officials

THIS has reference to the article last Oct. 26, 2002, titled "DAR orders installation of farmers at Benedicto property in Negros."

The article said in part that "Bañares has blamed the DAR head office for the delay in the farmer's installation." I would like to state certain facts to shed light on the article:

1. As the OIC-provincial agrarian reform officer for Negros Occidental, I am mandated to carry out all lawful orders and instructions from the Department of Agrarian Reform's top management. Toward this end, I would like to categorically state that I have never blamed my superiors, either privately or publicly, for perceived procedural lapses in the government's agrarian reform program, much less pass on the fault for any deferral of action to our top executives.

2. From Oct. 22 to Oct. 27 I was in Cebu City attending the "Diwa ng Paglilingkod Training" conducted by the Career Executive Service Board, so I designated Manuel Velasco as the officer in charge of our provincial office. The statements published in your paper identifying me as the person who "blamed" our central office for the delay in the installation of farmer-beneficiaries did not come from me. I was never interviewed by any INQUIRER reporter with respect to the Benedicto property or any agrarian reform issue involving Negros Occidental, while I was in Cebu City.

3. While I was in Cebu, I was informed by Velasco that they had received a memorandum from Undersecretary Efren C. Moncupa to handle the installation of farmer-beneficiaries on the Benedicto property. Therefore, any allusion of impropriety for delay in any action on my part by any interested group is unfair and unjustified. For us to effectively perform our mandate, prudence dictates that the matter be given sufficient time. It is thus unfortunate that the farmer-beneficiaries, whom we are mandated to assist, have used media as the venue to attack and pressure us to undertake internal instructions which we just received from the central office, thereby casting doubts on the intentions of the DAR and besmirching the reputations of our top executives.

—FELICIDAD C. BAÑARES,
OIC-provincial agrarian reform officer II,
Department of Agrarian Reform,
Provincial Agrarian Reform Office,
San Sebastian St., Dawis, Bacolod City

Benefits from a national ID system

A NATIONAL ID system (NIDS) will be more than just an anti-terrorism weapon. It will have some positive impact on economic development and increase efficiency in the bureaucracy.

Its biggest impact will be on the budget deficit. This will come from faster collection of government revenues due to increased speed at which business activities are done because an efficient bureaucracy won't require the same paperwork and red tape as today.

Paperwork would be cut by 50 percent based on US studies because the voluminous affidavits, certifications, copies, etc. to prove a person's identity and entitlements would no longer be necessary.

Another immediate advantage is that the NIDS will store personal information in a single national database. It will help the Commission on Elections hasten its modernization program to ensure clean and honest elections.

But like anything new, the NIDS has advantages and disadvantages. The main objection that it would be an invasion of privacy can easily be overcome. Those objecting to it may not realize it but anyone who has been employed, has a Social Security System/Government Service Insurance System number, registered as voter, filed an income tax return, obtained a driver's license, passport, National Bureau of Investigation or police clearance, National Statistics Office authentication, has a bank account, loan or credit card, etc. has given up some privacy because the individual doesn't only reveal private information but he or his employer also pays for the revelation.

The SSS ID system is the best available in the country today. It has a capacity to issue 25,000 tamper-proof ID cards per day, which can be expanded. By using a smart card, multiple applications can be encoded in an NID card such as basic office ID, permanent CTC number, SSS/GSIS member's ID, driver's license, TIN, NSO certification, NBI clearance and other personal needs including ATM card.

On top of it, the NID card would also serve as a voter's ID, saving the government billions of pesos the Comelec needs for its modernization program which it cannot undertake due to budgetary problems.

In fact, each application would be a countercheck on the others that enhances security. For instance, if the CTC number of an individual does not tally with his TIN, which can be seen through an NID card reader, then something is wrong with the ID.

Economies of scale would come into play by combining various IDs in a single NID card and make it agreeable to an owner to pay for a higher cost of driver's license, for instance, if it includes the cost of other IDs issued by several private suppliers. However, this will only be possible if the issuance of NID cards is centralized at the SSS.

—FRANK WENCESLAO,
92 Mindanao Avenue, Quezon City

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Saddam: Iraq may accept arms checks

BAGHDAD/UNITED NATIONS—President Saddam Hussein said on Monday Iraq would consider cooperating with a UN resolution on arms inspections if it was not just a pretext for a US attack.

At the United Nations, after weeks of wrangling, signs emerged that a compromise resolution may be agreed this week.

"If a resolution is issued which respects the UN charter, international law and Iraq's sovereignty, security and independence, and does not provide a cover for America's ill intentions, we will view it in a way that makes us deal with it," official Iraqi television quoted Saddam as telling visiting far-right Austrian politician Joerg Haider.

The comment appeared to mark a shift in Baghdad's stance.

Its officials have repeatedly insisted there is no need for a new resolution governing inspections of its alleged programs to develop nuclear, biological or chemical weapons.

But diplomats noted the reference to respecting Iraq's "sovereignty, security and independence," saying in the past this meant restrictions on where UN arms inspectors can go.

The United States has made several changes in the last week to a tough resolution intended to give unfettered access to the inspectors, who left in 1998 complaining Iraqi authorities had consistently obstructed their work.

US Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld told reporters at the Pentagon Nov. 4 that National Guard and reserves call-ups for a possible war in Iraq could soon be under way. AP

The US draft resolution warns that failure by Iraq to make a full declaration of its weapons of mass destruction and related materials or interference in the inspections could amount to a "material breach" of the 1991 Gulf War cease-fire pact, a legal basis for war.

Washington was now offering to wait until chief UN weapons inspector Hans Blix reported any major problems and then discuss them with the council before determining a "further material breach" or launching any military strike.

But the United States still opposed allowing the council to authorize the use of force or to determine what would constitute a "further material breach" of UN resolutions.

France, backed by Russia and China, fears "hidden triggers" in the wording of the resolution that would allow Washington to launch a military strike, overthrow Saddam and argue afterwards it had UN authorization.

In new language, Washington was also ready to give Iraq up to 50 days to prepare parts of a declaration Baghdad has to give on industry-related chemical or biological materials that may have military applications, the diplomats said.

Diplomats say because of differences among the five veto-holding permanent members of the Security Council—the United States, Britain, Russia, China and France—the revised resolution was not expected to be presented until late Tuesday or Wednesday.

The United States and Britain hope for a vote by Friday.

Prime Minister Tony Blair of Britain, the most steadfast of Washington's military allies, said Monday the five permanent members were converging on agreement.

"We are reaching the point of closure, I think," Blair told a news conference. "I don't want to prejudge the negotiations but they are proceeding satisfactorily.

"The absolutely critical issue for us is that we get an inspection regime in there that doesn't have the problems the last one had," he said. *Reuters*

Saudi tycoon accuses West of double standard

KUALA LUMPUR—The head of Saudi Arabia's biggest conglomerate has accused the West of pursuing a policy of double standard on Iraq and Israel, adding his voice to a growing chorus of criticism from the kingdom.

Sheikh Saleh Kamel, whose Dallah Albarakah Group (DBG) plans a media push to explain Islam to the West following a series of attacks blamed on Islamic radicals, said a US-led strike on Iraq would fuel anti-American sentiment among Muslims.

"There are two different standards," the chairman of the group with $8 billion in assets from banking to agriculture said in an interview on Sunday.

He said 99 percent of the Muslims did not like Saddam but that did not mean they endorsed Western action to disarm him for having weapons of mass destruction.

"If we know that Israel has many bombs, no one says anything," Kamel said.

Israeli deaths, which Muslims opposed, were big news in the West but, he said, Palestinian deaths were not seen the same way.

"When thousands of Palestinians are killed, or children killed by soldiers, we don't hear the same feeling. Are those people not humans?"

Saudi Arabia, in its strongest rejection yet of US President George W. Bush's policy of regime change in Iraq, said on Sunday it would not allow the United States to launch an attack on Baghdad from Saudi soil.

Saudi Arabia, a key US ally in the Middle East, was the launchpad in the 1991 Gulf War to push Iraq out of Kuwait but Foreign Minister Saud al-Faisal said US bases would not be used against Iraq, even if a strike had United Nations approval.

Anti-US sentiment is on the rise in Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and other Muslim states over perceived pro-Israeli US bias but Kamel said he was also worried by anti-Muslim bias in the West in the wake of the Sept. 11 attacks on New York and Washington. *Reuters*

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Winona Ryder's fate up to jury as trial ends

LOS ANGELES,—A jury Monday began deciding the fate of movie star Winona Ryder as Hollywood's trial of the year ended with prosecutors urging panelist to treat her as a common shoplifter, not a celebrity.

"She came, she stole, she left. End of story," Los Angeles prosecutor Ann Rundle told the 12 jurors before they retired to consider their verdict against the 31-year-old Oscar-nominated actress.

"It is a simple case of theft. The law does not say there is a higher standard of proof for celebrities. The law treats everybody the same. I am asking you to hold Miss Ryder responsible for her conduct," she said.

The plea came as the prosecution summed up its case against the celebrity defendant at the end of a six-day trial that has gripped readers and television audiences across the world.

Ryder, 31, is accused of stealing more than $5,500 worth of designer goods and accessories from a posh Beverly Hills department store on Dec. 12 last year.

If convicted of pinching some 20 items allegedly found in her bag when she was arrested outside the store, she could face three years in jail, although analysts say she is more likely to get probation if found guilty.

Burglary tools

Rundle told the 12-strong jury in Beverly Hills that Ryder had "burglary tools with her" when she entered the plush Saks Fifth Avenue store 11 months ago.

She had a small pair of scissors and a plastic bag stuffed with tissue paper, which she used to wrap some of the items she allegedly stole, the prosecutor said.

The jury—which includes top Hollywood producer Peter Guber, who headed Sony Pictures when Ryder made two hit pictures for the studio—deliberated for 15 minutes before adjourning for the day on Monday.

Ryder, who is free on $20,000 bail, has pleaded not guilty to charges of grand theft, commercial burglary and vandalism following the incident that had dominated celebrity news for the past 11 months.

Lawyers for the actress, who did not give evidence in her trial, insist she is the victim of overzealous security guards who allegedly made up evidence to frame her.

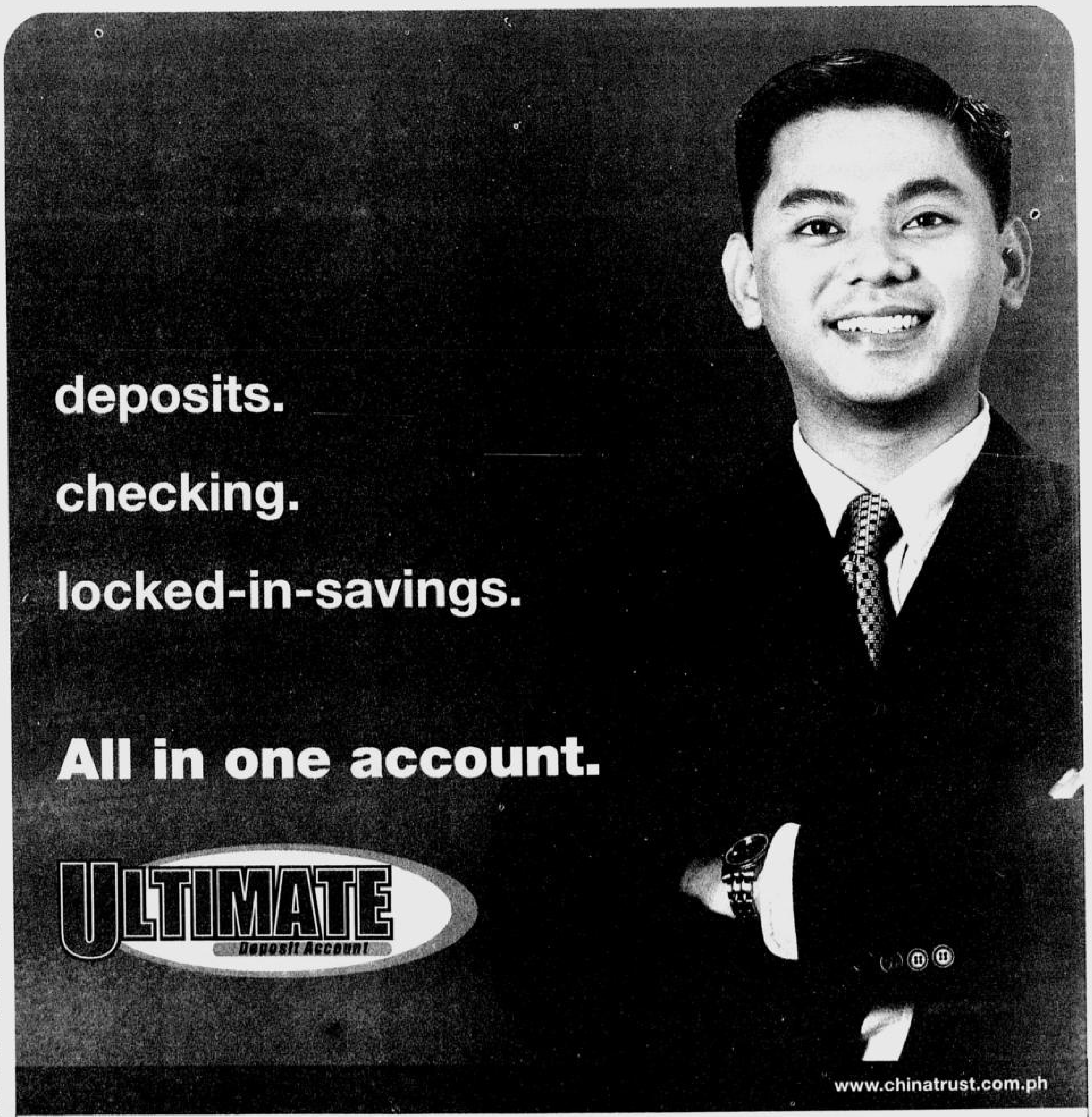
Defense attorney Mark Geragos summed up his case by suggesting that prosecution witnesses had lied in order to incriminate the star.

But one defense witness—a disgruntled former Saks' employee—told the jury that Saks' security officers had admitted trying to "nail that rich Beverly Hills bitch (on) shoplifting charges."

And Geragos accused a store detective of trying to cash in on Ryder's fame by selling her story and of stealing the phone numbers of movie star Keanu Reeves and of Irish rocker Bono from the actress' address book.

Ryder has made more than 30 movies, including "Reality Bites," "Beetlejuice," "Mr. Deeds," "Girl, Interrupted," and "Edward Scissorhands."

She has twice been nominated for Oscars: for best actress in 1995's "Little Women" and for a best supporting role in 1993's "The Age of Innocence." *AFP*



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CIA missile killed 6 al-Qaida suspects in Yemen

READY FOR COMMUNIST PARTY CONGRESS

A worker arranges a flower garden featuring the hammer and sickle, the emblem of the Communist Party, Nov. 5, in Shanghai, China. Chinese President Jiang Zemin is expected to retire and will be replaced by Vice President Hu Jintao as party leader at the 16th Chinese Communist Party Congress in Beijing, starting from Nov. 8.

AP

WASHINGTON—A missile fired by a pilotless drone operated by the US Central Intelligence Agency killed six al-Qaida suspects in Yemen, including a man believed to be responsible for the 2000 bombing of the US destroyer Cole, US media reported Monday.

Yemeni authorities identified the man as Ali Qaed Sunian al-Harithi, also known as Abu Ali.

They said he was one of six people killed Sunday when the vehicle they were traveling in was destroyed by a powerful explosion.

The Yemeni government did not say what caused the blast. But CNN television, citing unnamed sources, reported that the vehicle was hit by a Hellfire missile fired from the CIA drone.

According to NBC News, the car had been observed by the drone in the northern province of Marib, about 160 km east of Sanaa, for a period of time before it was attacked.

Secondary explosions were seen after the missile hit the vehicle, indicating there were explosives inside the car, NBC News said.

The five other men, who traveled with al-Harithi, were described as his close associates.

The CIA refused to comment on the reports.

US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said al-Harithi was thought to have been involved in the Oct. 12, 2000 attack on the USS Cole as it refueled in the Yemeni port of Aden.

Seventeen US sailors died in the attack.

"Needless to say he is an individual who has been sought after as an al-Qaida member as well as a suspected terrorist connected to the USS Cole. So it would be a very good thing if he were out of business," he said.

But Rumsfeld declined to comment when asked if the United States played any role in al-Harithi's death, saying the reports he had received were incomplete.

He said US personnel have shared intelligence with the Yemenis and helped them think through how to deal with al-Qaida in the country.

Al-Harithi is reported to have served as one of al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden's senior bodyguards and was one of Bin Laden's key lieutenants in Yemen.

Bin Laden also has taken credit for masterminding Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on the United States, which killed more than 3,000.

A US defense official said al-Harithi was "one of the kingpins" in the attack on the Cole, which was rammed by an explosives-laden boat that blew a hole in its hull.

Yemeni authorities said traces of explosives as well as ammunition, weapons and communications devices were found in the gutted vehicle. *AFP*

Italy gov't vows to rebuild wrecked village

ROME—Italy's government on Monday pledged to rebuild the village of San Giuliano di Puglia, amid mounting anger over its failure to prevent the tragedy in which 26 children died when an earthquake demolished their school.

Interior Minister Giuseppe Pisanu told parliament that Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi had "given his assurances that within 24 months, San Giuliano and the other affected villages will be made completely inhabitable."

Parliament observed a minute's silence the day after San Giuliano buried its dead—three women and 26 schoolchildren—three days after the village was struck by the deadly tremor measuring 5.4 on the Richter scale.

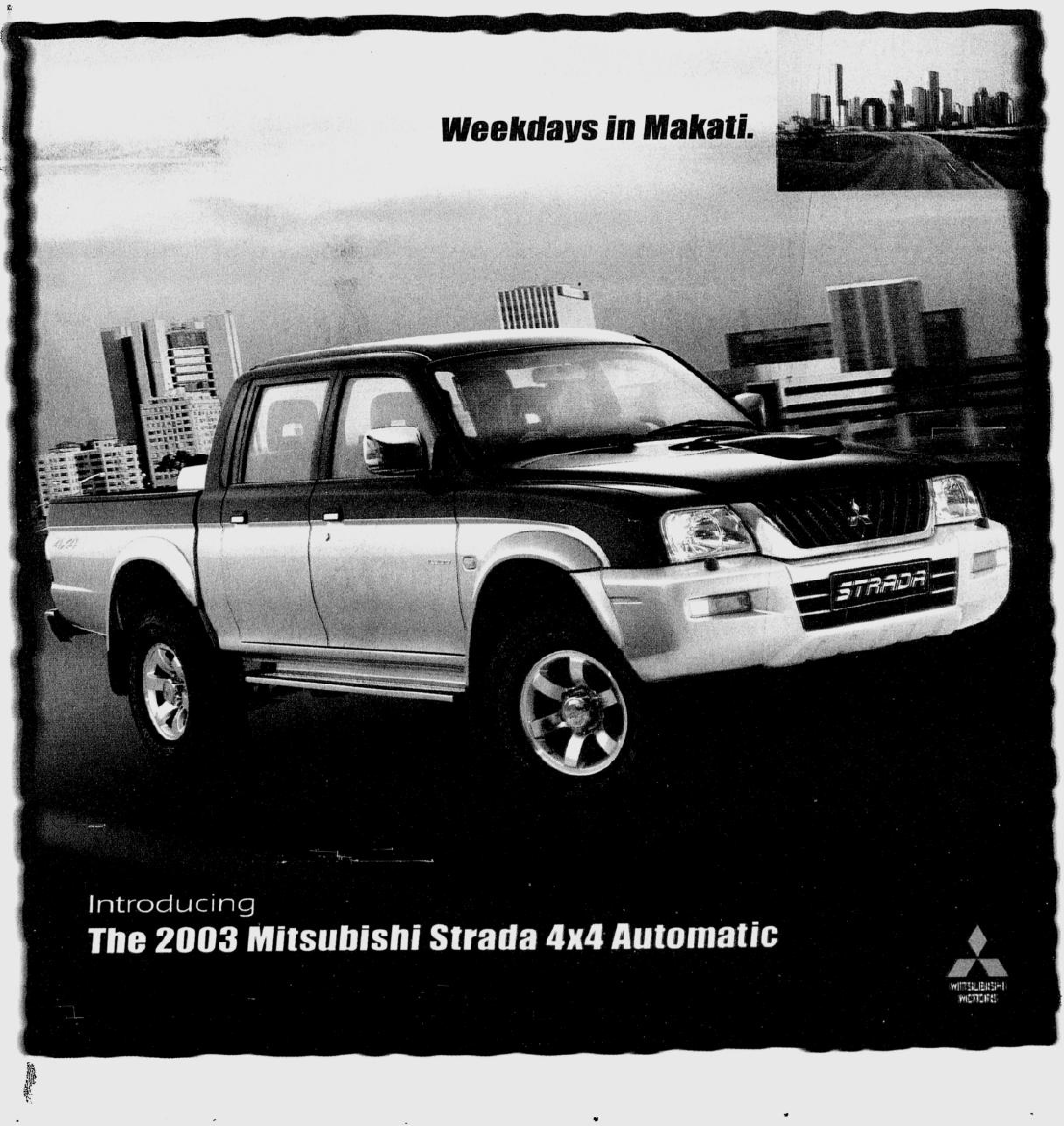
But few deputies turned up for the parliamentary session, as public anger grew over successive governments' failure to adopt measures that could have prevented the school tragedy.

Enzo Boschi, the head of Italy's national geophysics and vulcanology institute (INGV) launched a scathing attack on Italy's politicians for breaking promises made after a 1980 quake that killed over 2,500 people in the Irpinia region around Naples.

"People have been talking about measures to limit earthquake damage for more than 20 years," Boschi said. "But neither the government, nor the state, nor the regional or local administrations have done anything."

In a 1998 report, his institute said San Giuliano and its surrounding Molise region should be designated an earthquake zone, but governments have failed to turn the recommendations into law.

Some experts have blamed the school disaster on recent renovations that added second-floor classrooms and heavy cement reinforcement to the upper walls and roof of the collapsed wing. *AFP*



Suicide bombing in Tel Aviv kills 2; Sharon gov't survives

KFAR SABA, Israel—A suicide bombing in Israel killed two people apart from the bomber Monday and eight Palestinians died in the territories in a fresh upsurge in violence, while Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's new coalition survived no-confidence motions.

Leftist and central opposition parties backed by Arab factions in parliament failed to muster the necessary 61 votes to bring down Sharon's truncated coalition in the 120-seat assembly.

Sharon enlisted the backing of the far-right National Union bloc to ensure the vote would go his way, although it appeared unlikely the hardline faction would join his minority government, which is already listing to the right.

Despite the victory, Sharon was still expected to have to go to the ballot before the assembly's term expires in Oct. 2003, as his whittled-down coalition gropes for allies among extreme right-wing and religious factions, while still coping with Palestinian violence and an economy in crisis.

Shimon Peres, the Labor veteran who quit as foreign minister last week in a row over funding for Jewish settlements, told CNN television he expected early elections.

"I think Israel will go to elections no matter what happens today or tomorrow. Since normally it would be in October, I imagine it'll be a few months before that," he said.

However, it appeared probable that Sharon would reject a condition by his right-wing rival and former premier Benjamin Netanyahu, who wants to run for their Likud party in new elections, to take the vacant foreign minister's post in return for snap polls.

"Taking the nation to immediate elections would be irresponsible," Sharon told Likud members. "I hope everyone acts responsibly and doesn't try to make it difficult for a stable government to function."

Sharon also succeeded in pushing his candidate for defense minister, retired army chief Shaul Mofaz, through the parliament, despite left-wing calls for a delay in his appointment.

The Meretz party first wanted an official investigation into an Amnesty International report released Monday accusing the army, which Mofaz commanded until July, of war crimes in its West Bank offensive in April, when troops invaded Palestinian cities after a wave of suicide bombings.

The political moves coincided with a flare-up in the two-year conflict, with Israeli fire claiming eight Palestinian lives, including a top Hamas militant, while a Palestinian suicide bomber killed himself and two others.

In the West Bank town of Nablus, Hamed Sadr, 35, a senior Hamas militant, was killed with an associate when his car blew up in a blast which the Palestinians said was an Israeli targeted killing.

The car of Sadr, whose nephew killed himself and three Israeli soldiers in another suicide bomb attack on the Jewish settlement of Ariel last week, blew up as a drone was overflying the area, witnesses said.

A few hours later, a suicide bomber blew up himself and killed two people—one of them an Israeli security guard trying to stop him—at a shopping mall in the Israeli town of Kfar Saba, on the edge of Tel Aviv. *AFP*

AN ISRAELI policeman stands at the destroyed enterance of a commercial center in Kfar Saba, just north of Tel Aviv Nov. 4, where a. suicide bomber killed two people. AFP

Russian Army clamps down on Chechnya

MOSCOW—The Russian army launched a massive clampdown around war-torn separatist Chechnya on Monday amid fears of fresh attacks like last month's bloody hostage-taking in Moscow, a senior presidential aid said.

"The special operation is the authorities' response to (top Chechen warlord Shamil) Basayev's statements," President Vladimir Putin's top aid on Chechnya, Sergei Yastrzhembsky, told a press conference.

Basayev, who has claimed responsibility for the deadly siege in which 50 rebels seized 800 people hostage in a Moscow theater, warned in a statement that he was preparing to "bring the war back home" to Russia.

"We have paid close attention to the military part of this information which threatens new terrorist attacks. The aim of this operation is to uncover groups of kamikazes and those who have trained them," Yastrzhembsky said.

Russian troops have shut down all major roads in Chechnya and are "carrying out 'mopping-up' operations and checking documents," said the head of the pro-Moscow Chechen security council, Rudnik Dudayev, as quoted by ITAR-TASS.

All access roads to the capital Grozny, except for one, have been blocked, he added.

Some 400 Chechen rebels are currently hiding in Grozny, according to an official from the Russian military headquarters in the North Caucasus quoted by Interfax.

Russian Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov said Sunday he had ordered a halt to a planned army withdrawal from Chechnya in response to last month's Moscow hostage crisis in which 120 civilians died.

The Russian military has an estimated 80,000 troops in and around the separatist North Caucasus republic, where Moscow launched a self-declared "anti-terrorism" operation three years ago.

Ivanov said the military had evidence that new suicide attacks against Russia were being planned in Chechnya and that accordingly Moscow had decided to step up its military campaign in the region.

The Chechen security council chief, however, protested against the 'mopping-up' operations, saying that the military was flouting new rules governing the security sweeps that were supposed to avoid human rights abuses.

Chechnya's only elected lawmaker in the State Duma lower house of parliament, Aslambek Aslakhanov, said that "civilians are the ones who suffer from military crackdowns, not those who they are aimed against."

The Moscow attack coincided with an apparent new alliance between Basayev and Aslan Maskhadov, who was elected president of Chechnya in 1997 and had been viewed a more moderate rebel leader who could represent the republic at peace negotiations with Moscow.

Russian human rights campaigners and anti-war activists are to hold a two-day international peace conference in Moscow over the weekend to press for a negotiated settlement on the Chechen conflict, organizers said Monday.

Participants will call on Putin to open talks with Chechen representatives including Maskhadov whom the Russian authorities accuse of being one of the organizers of last month's hostage-taking. *AFP*

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Task force seizes misdeclared veggies

LA TRINIDAD, Benguet—The task force assigned to stop the smuggling of vegetables confiscated last week 23 container vans of misdeclared vegetables from New Zealand.

Councilor John Kim, a member of the task force composed of other Benguet officials as well as representatives from the Department of Agriculture and the Bureau of Customs, said the latest haul could amount to 1,000 metric tons. Kim said a container van had 44 tons of vegetables.

The latest raid was conducted at the Manila International Container Port.

Kim said the shipment was labeled as apples but the crates actually contained carrots and ginger. He said this was the biggest haul since the task force was formed on Sept. 11.

Kim said the task force has confiscated about 3,000 tons of semi-temperate vegetables or a little less than 2 percent of the vegetable demand of the country.

The Benguet Vegetable Commission, which was formed last year, was given P300,000 to come up with baseline data on the vegetable farmers and their crops, according to Benguet Board Member Marciano Inso Sr.

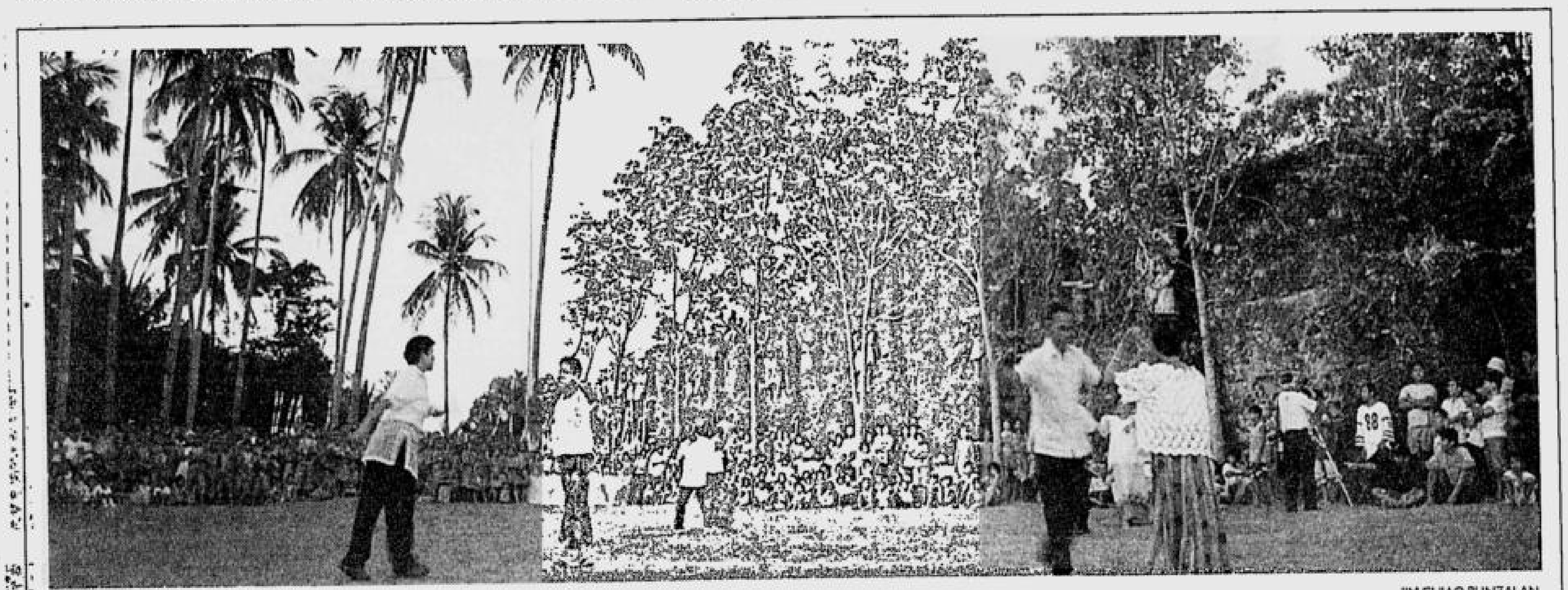
The data, he said, would be used to prepare the province for the full implementation of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade by 2005.

But the commission failed to do its job, Inso said. Benguet farmers had already lost about P100 million because of smuggling, he added.

Inso, chair of the provincial board's committee on trade and industry, should have prepared measures to deal with the trade barriers caused by vegetable importation, Board Member Johnny Uy said.

But Gov. Raul Molintas defended the commission, saying it had actively advocated for the farmers by actively calling for the suspension of the GATT.

During a consultation last week, provincial officials asked the farmers to form a federation of farmers' groups and cooperatives so they could have a united stand against vegetable smuggling. *Frank Cimatu, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*



JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

CAMIGUIN FESTIVAL
Participants dance during last month's lanzones festival that highlighted Camiguin's products and culture. One year ago today, Mambajao, Camiguin was hit by flash floods that killed hundreds of residents and caused the disappearance of many.

Holiday orders came too late

By Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—Negrenses were robbed of a holiday on Monday.

The Office of the Governor received an order from Malacañang, declaring Nov. 4 a special non-working holiday at 3:10 p.m. By then, it was already too late because the working day was almost over.

Employees both in the government and private sectors were expecting to have a long holiday from Oct. 31 to Nov. 5 when the province celebrates the *Cinco de Noviembre*.

The *Cinco de Noviembre* is an annual public holiday in Negros Occidental, which marks the province's victory and liberation from Spain on Nov. 5, 1898.

Gov. Joseph Maranon last week had asked President Macapagal-Arroyo to declare Nov. 4 a holiday because it was in between the long All Saints and Souls Days holidays and the *Cinco de Noviembre*.

Monday came but the local officials had not received any word about their request.

The employees had to drag themselves back to work, despite the transport strike by the United Negros Drivers Operators Center (Undoc) to protest the series of oil price increases.

The Undoc had claimed the strike paralyzed about 98 of the public transport in Bacolod and the province. But police officials placed the participation on the strike at 85 percent.

A copy of the Presidential Order 281 was received by the Office of the Governor only at 3:10 p.m. on Monday.

Cops blame bus driver for mishap

ROXAS, Isabela—The driver of the mini-bus that fell off a detour bridge here on Monday afternoon insisted on passing through the swollen Siffu River despite warnings from the police, a top provincial police official said.

Senior Supt. Nelson Nario, Isabela police director, said two men were killed in the accident while 19 others were still missing as of Tuesday morning. At least 23 passengers were rescued on Monday night.

The Tuguegarao City-bound bus was carrying at least 45 passengers when it met the accident, he said.

Nario said the driver of the Dolbo Trans bus, Ferdinand Olivas, forced his way into the detour bridge despite the warnings. The Siffu River was swollen on Monday due to continuous rains.

"The driver was stubborn. He forced his way so the bus fell off the bridge and was swept by strong river current," Nario told the INQUIRER.

Some survivors said Olivas stepped on the gas as the bus tried to cross the bridge. Olivas, however, lost control, causing the bus to slip and fell off the bridge.

Nario said Olivas surrendered to the Tuguegarao City police. The bus conductor, Jojo Manzano, was still missing, police said.

Mayor Benedict Calderon said rescue workers pulled the bus out of the Siffu River on Monday night but they did not find any passenger either pinned or trapped inside.

"The (rescue workers) took the bus out of the water and we were hoping there were people still alive and trapped inside. We did not find anyone inside the bus," he said.

Nario identified the fatalities as Jerry Mon Ordiales, a resident of Tuguegarao City, and Dionisio Bicarme, a village councilor in Mallig, Cagayan.

Ordiales' body was recovered on Monday night while Bicarme's body was found at the downstream of the Siffu River on Tuesday morning. *Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Terrorism hype victimizes Pakistani studes

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—The hype on threats of terrorism and terrorists has taken its toll on students hooked on such simple pleasures as logging on the Internet.

A group of Pakistani students here aroused police attention and suspicion from their neighbors due to their nocturnal activities.

Reports in the local media said the students would often come home late at night and leave early in the morning.

The same reports said the students were suspected members of the Al Qaida network of Osama Bin Laden, the alleged perpetrators of the Sept. 11 bombings in the US.

Roberto Canong, regional chief of the Bureau of Immigration and Deportation invited the four students yesterday to the BID office to clear the reports and the rumors.

"They explained that they stayed out late at night because they were at Internet stations," said Canong in a telephone interview with the INQUIRER.

The students also came to the office of Iloilo City Mayor Jerry Treñas on Monday to clarify the reports.

"They have done nothing suspicious or illegal," Canong said after the students presented their immigration papers, including student visas, which were "all in order."

One of the students also presented a certification from the BID head office that he was a namesake of another foreigner who was blacklisted by the bureau.

The students, who in their late 20s and early 30s, have been here for several years and are finishing studies in engineering and electronics in a university here.

One of them has been staying in this city for eight years and is married to an Ilongga.

Senior Supt. Rolando Rabara, chief of the Regional Intelligence and Investigation Division, said policemen checked on the Pakistanis last week to verify the reports.

"It's part of normal operations we conduct on Sudanese and other foreigners from countries in the Middle East," he explained.

He said there was nothing wrong in investigating the students because it was meant to ensure the safety of the city from terrorist threats.

Canong advised residents and the police to "be cautious . . . go slow" in guarding against security threats because unverified reports and rumors "might create panic and paranoia among the people."

"There are no records that they are fugitives. Based on the information that we have, they are not terrorists, not even illegal aliens," said Canong.

In a radio interview, one of the students said they understand the reaction of the people here because of "what is happening around the world today. I don't feel bad about them."

But the students said they were afraid they would be harmed because of the terrorist tag on them. "It is unfair and unjust," Canong quoted one of the students as saying.

"We assure you all that we are not terrorists. We are good people," one of the students later said in Hiligaynon.

The human rights group Karapatan condemned the discrimination on foreigners especially those from the Middle East and Muslims.

"The basic rights and dignity of people are being violated," said Samuel Jaco, Karapatan secretary general in Panay.

MILF demolition man eyed in blast

COTABATO CITY—Abu Hashim, the alleged Moro Islamic Liberation Front's demolition man who was arrested here last week for carrying an explosive, is now being eyed as one of the suspects in the deadly blast in Kidapawan City last month.

This developed as Hashim accused the military and police authorities of torturing him. He is now detained at the Cotabato Provincial Jail in Amas, Kidapawan City.

Alberto Salvo, chief of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group in Central Mindanao, on Tuesday said they were probing the possible participation of Hashim in the explosion in Kidapawan that killed seven people. Hashim allegedly looked very similar to one of the suspects.

Hashim was arrested in Barangay Raradangan, Alamada on Oct. 28 in a military checkpoint after he was found bringing an explosive material.

Salvo said Hashim, who was flagged down by the military, tried to evade arrest by transferring to another motorcycle driven by a certain PO3 Tabara, who is also wanted by the authorities.

Maj. Julieto Ando, spokesperson of the 6th Infantry Division, said Hashim is an Afghan-trained bomber.

The MILF, through Mohagher Iqbal, MILF information chief, admitted that Hashim is an explosive expert. *Jeffrey Tupas, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Beach volleyball tournament in basketball court?

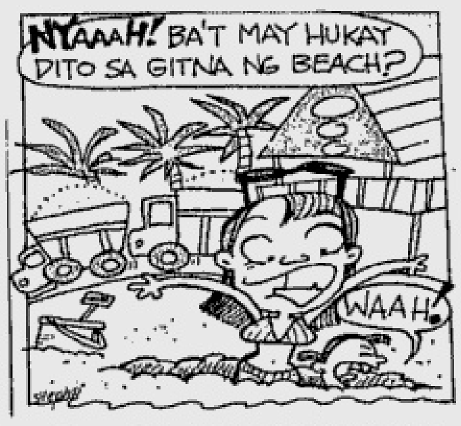
By Alex V. Pal
PDI Visayas Bureau

DUMAGUETE CITY—The city government will be forced to hold its annual invitational beach volleyball tournament in a basketball court paved with asphalt at the City Quadrangle here starting on Friday unless the city government buys some 90 cubic meters of sand to cover the playing area.

Jose Guirit, City Sports and Youth Development Officer, said they planned to buy sand to cover the basketball court after the Sta. Monica Beach Resort refused the city government's trucks from taking sand from their resort in Barangay Banilad last week.

Jose Varela, manager of the Sta. Monica Beach Resort, had complained that the city government hauled three truckloads of sand fronting the beach resort without asking their permission.

"We are surviving as a business because of our beach and now there is a hole in front of our resort," he lamented.



NYAAAH! BA'T MAY HUKAY DITO SA GITNA NG BEACH?
WAAH!
stephil

He wrote to Banilad Barangay Captain Jose Pino and Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Officer Samuel Racho, asking them to stop the sand extraction.

The National Invitational Beach Volleyball tournament has been held in Dumaguete for more than three years now. The city government also covered the basketball court with sand but this was the first time that local officials tried to quarry sand from a beach resort.

Organizers said there is no sand bar in Dumaguete that can accommodate the needs of the beach volleyball tournament.

On Oct. 19, the city government's payloader and dump truck, hauled sand three times in front of the beach resort.

Varela said the resort was shown copies of the permits issued by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the Office of the Barangay Captain authorizing the quarrying activity.

Dumaguete City Mayor Agustin Perdices wrote to the DENR on Oct. 9, seeking a permit to remove 90 cubic meters of sand to "clear the drainage canal" beside Sta. Monica Beach Resort as "this has been obstructed due to the accumulation of sand due to the prevailing southwest monsoon."

According to the Oct. 21 permit issued by Racho, the city government was told to inform the residents of the area as to the purpose of the removal, extraction, and transport of the sand materials.

But Varela denied they were informed of such a move beforehand.

He also said the drainage canal referred to by the city government was the drainage of Sta. Monica, thus part of the resort's titled property and of its foreshore lease.

Another truck again tried to get sand on Thursday, using a Sand and Gravel Special Permit issued by Negros Oriental Gov. George Arnaiz dated Oct. 29, authorizing the city government to "hand transport abandoned stockpile of crushed stones" from the beach resort.

The extraction, however, failed to push through after Varela refused to allow further quarrying fronting their beach resort.

Perdices, however, denied any knowledge of the sand quarrying operation in Banilad, saying he would look into the report.

He said he was surprised that Varela did not contact him to personally inform the mayor of his objections.

ROUNDUP

8 charged for tree cutting

BACOLOD CITY—A policeman and seven others on Oct. 29 were charged with violation of the Forestry Code for allegedly cutting trees worth about P200,000 in Bago City, Negros Occidental. Charged before the Bago City Prosecutor's Office were SPO2 Gilbert Montebon, Gamay Mallorca, Bebe Mallorca, Julie Leganad, Johnny Gonzales, Gerardo Sumayang, Michael Narciso and Roberto Mariano. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources, which filed the complaint, alleged that the respondents cut 15,833 board feet of lauan inside a private property in Sitio Tabidiao, Barangay Ilijan, in Bago, about 21 kilometers southwest of this city. *Carla Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau*

2 rebels killed

BACOLOD CITY—A leader of the "Rebolusyonaryong Hukbo ng Bayan" (RHB) and a guerrilla fighter were killed, while two others were wounded in an encounter with Army soldiers on Oct. 24 in Barangay Tiling, Cauayan town, 199 kilometers south here. The military identified the slain rebel leader as Lino Silvano. The RHB is the armed component of a rebel faction called the Marxist-Leninist Party of the Philippines. The RHB operated in the hinterland areas of Kabankalan City and Cauayan. The other fatality was 17-year-old rebel from Kabankalan. Captured was wounded RHB fighter Jonathan Diosnaparan, 20, of Palawan. The other injured rebel was not identified as his fleeing comrades took him away, the military said.
Carla Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau

'Discriminatory' tourist fee

DUMAGUETE CITY—Resort owners in the island-barangay of Apo off the coast of Dauin town protested the plan of the island's Protected Area Management Board (PAMB) to implement a fee structure that "discriminates" against foreigners. Mike Butler, part owner of the Apo Island Beach Resort, said during the special meeting of the PAMB here, that the PAMB's plan to charge higher rates for foreigners was unfair. "In other countries, we are not charged a different rate because we are locals or foreigners," said Butler, an Australian. Under the proposal, foreigners entering the island will be asked to pay P100 and P20 for Filipino. Foreigners would be charged P500 per day for cottage rental and P300 for Filipinos. For diving, a foreigner would be charged P500 and P200 for Filipinos. Apo Island is governed by a PAMB because the island is under the National Integrated Protected Areas Program of the government. *Alex Pal, PDI Visayas Bureau*

2,000 jobs in Bohol

TAGBILARAN CITY—Bohol Gov. Erico Aumentado said he expects a boost in the economy of his province with some 2,000 jobs to be generated with the implementation of two projects. These are the P2.384-billion Bohol Irrigation Project Stage II, the P1.073-billion Bohol Circumferential Road Improvement Project Phase II and the Bohol-Leyte Interconnection Project Phase II. Aumentado made the announcement following the recent signing of the formal agreements with Nippon Koei Co. Ltd. and Pacific Consultants Intl., the consultants of the three foreign-funded projects. *Chito Fuentes, PDI Visayas Bureau*

DSWD calls for stop to military attacks

By Grace Cantal-Albasin
PDI Mindanao Bureau

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—The Department of Social Welfare and Development in Malabang, Lanao del Sur has urged the military to stop operation "Thunderstorm" against the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) because it would be difficult to transport goods for the 15,854 individuals displaced by the operations.

This as Muslims started yesterday the observance of the Ramadan, the 40 days of Holy fasting.

Corinne Tabua, Provincial Social Welfare officer in Lanao del Sur, said they have already asked Maj. Gen. Alfonso Dagudag, chief of the 4th Infantry Division, to stop the operations last week.

Tabua said General Dagudag had not responded to their request.

"Maybe because there is nothing General Dagudag can do . . . Right now I am worried about the goods we need to bring in Malabang since there must be no movement tomorrow especially that it is the first day of the Ramadan," she said.

The INQUIRER tried but failed to reach Dagudag.

Tabua said about 1,520 families have not been served with the basic goods after they left their homes in remote barangays in the towns of Sultan Gumander, Marugong, Ganassi and Kapatagan in Lanao del Sur. Most of the evacuees are now taking refuge in Malabang.

The latest evacuation reported was in Calanugas town where 681 families from Barangays Gas, Mimbalawag, Pagalungan and Kapayuran were displaced during a bombing operation.

The evacuees are now in villages near the highway.

Tabua said about five houses were burned, while a civilian was killed during the bombing. She identified the civilian casualty as Mercado Sarip, 28.

"He was suspected of being an MILF member and we have already informed General Dagudag about this and he told us he would have it investigated," Tabua said.

She said the Office of Civil Defense in Cotabato City delivered the goods from Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes on Oct. 31 in Calanugas.

Last week, the military reported it overran another camp, Asibnu Abbas Darul Interal of the MILF's 305th Brigade.

Maj. Johnny Macañas, 4th Infantry Division spokesperson, said the military recovered 25 kilograms of Ammonium Nitrate, 21 dynamite sticks, 44 disposable syringes, a wooden paper printer, a rocket-propelled grenade, notes on bomb making explosives and lists of MILF sympathizers.

Macañas said the camp had 11 structures, communication center, a Madaris (school), armory house for explosive manufacturing, a mosque, multi-purpose hall, mess hall, underground bunkers and a power generator.

GARCIA

Davao lawmaker urges GMA to fire GSIS chief

DAVAO CITY—Rep. Prospero Nograles has urged President Macapagal-Arroyo to fire Winston Garcia as president of the Government Service Insurance System.

Nograles' call came after Garcia decided to purchase Juan Luna's "Parisian Life" for P50.6 million using GSIS funds.

"If Garcia does not know the meaning of *delicadeza* and decides to cling on to his position, President Arroyo should make the move and fire him at once," he said.

Nograles said Garcia committed a serious blunder when he decided to use GSIS money to purchase Luna's 1892 painting.

He said it was a simple case of fund misuse.

Nograles admitted that the painting, which Christie's auctioned off in Hong Kong, is a priceless piece of art and is part of the country's historical and cultural treasure, but insisted that buying it through the use of GSIS funds was immoral.

He said the GSIS under Garcia would be tightfisted on matters that directly promote the welfare of its members while it is overly generous on a piece of artwork. *Anthony Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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Remains of Abra mayor's assassin unclaimed

By F. Cimatu, L. Balbin Jr.
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau
and Romulo Ponte
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

CAMP DANGWA, La Trinidad, Benguet—Seven days after the assassination of Mayor Clarence Benwaren of Tineg, Abra, the body of his alleged assassin lay unclaimed in a funeral parlor in Calauan, Laguna.

Senior Supt. Eugene Martin, chief of the Cordillera police's mobile group, said no relative has claimed the body of Edberto Amoncio, 26, at the Funeraria Señerez in Calauan as of Monday. Amoncio's driver's license showed that he was a resident of Quezon City.

"The key to the investigation will be the people who will claim Amoncio's body," he said.

Investigators have already located the address written in Amoncio's driver's license but the house's owner said they did not know him, Martin said.

In Calauan, Laguna, police have started to search for Amoncio's family. Danny Belarmino, caretaker of the Señerez Funeral Parlor in this town, told the INQUIRER that some police left Tuesday morning for Quezon City to locate the suspect's relatives and ask them to claim Amoncio's body.

No choice

Otherwise, he said, the funeral management would be forced to bury Amoncio's remains in any cemetery.

Belarmino added that they noticed two persons frequenting the parlor's vicinity and who seemed to be interested in the killed suspect.

Witnesses pointed to Amoncio as the one who shot Benwaren pointblank inside the San Isidro Labrador Church in Calauan with a .45-caliber pistol.

Benwaren was one of the principal sponsors in a wedding, where the groom was a native of Abra, and was about to sign the marriage contract when Amoncio allegedly approached him from behind and shot him on the neck.

Police later caught up with Amoncio and shot him dead.

The Calauan police have charged with murder the driver of the suspects' supposed getaway vehicle.

But Martin said Fernan Carandang, the driver of the rented van, was unlikely involved in the murder.

"He left the van in front of the Calauan police station near the church (where Benwaren was shot) and waited there," Martin said. "If Carandang was involved, he wouldn't have parked there."

Also recovered from Amoncio's wallet was an expense account of his group, which was traced from Tayum, Abra, to Calauan. The account showed that the group incurred expenses amounting to more than P50,000 for casing Benwaren.

Offer

In Abra, Benwaren's wife, Soledad, rejected an offer from the provincial government to hold a necrological service for the mayor at the provincial capitol.

"I am not comfortable," Soledad told the INQUIRER on Monday.

She said she would not be able to express her real grief should her husband's body be taken to the capitol. She cited the Benwarens' political differences with some Abra politicians for this discomfort.

Benwaren's father, former Tineg Mayor Pedro Benwaren, said the offer from the provincial government was relayed through San Juan Mayor Medel Taverner.

The elder Benwaren also said they returned a wreath sent by Abra Gov. Vicente Valera to a local flower shop because those who delivered it just left it on the street in front of the Benwarens' house.

Benwaren's body was taken to the family house here after a wake in Baguio City.

Valera dismissed reports linking him to Benwaren's murder.

"I vehemently deny all accusations linking me to the death of Benwaren. If they have evidence, I am willing to answer it in the proper body," he told reporters.

He said the reports linking him to Benwaren's murder came from "disgruntled people affected by my campaign against illegal drugs."

"They are military officials and some political enemies whom I will name in the proper time and forum," he said.

Marines sent to secure Tawi-tawi

ZAMBOANGA CITY—Soldiers under the 2nd Marine Brigade were deployed to Tawi-tawi from Basilan on Sunday.

The transfer, according to Southern Command chief Lt. Gen. Narciso Abaya, was "a deliberate plan of Task Force Comet because of persistent reports of some threat groups seeking refuge in Tawi-tawi."

He was referring to the Abu Sayyaf.

Brig. Gen. Renato Miranda, chief of the Marine Forces South, also admitted to the INQUIRER that one of their objectives in transferring the troops from Basilan to Tawi-tawi "is to address the existing Abu Sayyaf Group."

Miranda said it was "high time" that exit points in the Southern Philippines which is only adjacent to Malaysia and Indonesia were secured.

"The Jamaah Islamiya is also among the main concerns of the intelligence effort there, that is why we also strengthened the border security," he added. *Julie Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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INQUIRER Northern Luzon
Editor Jun Bandayrel ◆ Bureau Chief Rolando B. Fernandez

Can the gov't really stop 'jueteng'?

By Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes
Dagupan City

IN THE Biblical story, Satan offered Jesus Christ all the kingdoms of the world if Jesus would worship him. The Son of God refused.

It may take the strength of Jesus Christ for the government and police officials to resist what "jueteng" operators tempt them with—money—to allow the illegal numbers game to flourish in their areas.

In Pangasinan alone, police records show that the daily collection from jueteng, at its peak, reaches P8 million, or P240 million a month. Of the total collection, about 20 percent go to "protection money" to government and police officials, according to jueteng employees and financiers.

A public relations officer of a jueteng financier in Dagupan City said the protection money was offered to officials "on a silver platter."

Some officials initially refused to accept anything from the operators, the employee said. But the operators doggedly convinced them into accepting what they called a "gift from a friend."

The jueteng employee cited a case of a congressman who did not want to receive money. "But we gift-wrapped the money and told him, 'This is just a gift from a friend to a friend,'" the employee said.

The congressman, the jueteng employee recalled, relented and accepted the "monthly gift" from then on.

'Hiya' factor

Weak to resist the tempting offers of cash, most government and police officials wilt when their names are linked to illegal activities.

"Local officials are still affected by negative publicity and comments that they are linked to illegal activities," said Lingayen-Dagupan Archbishop Oscar Cruz, who has been waging a war against jueteng.

Cruz regularly conducts surveys on the existence of jueteng, prostitution and illegal drugs in his diocese, and gives the results to local officials. The survey results are published in local newspapers and aired over the radio.

"The mayors come to me to complain why their town was listed as having rampant jueteng operations. When I said it was the survey result, they promised to stop the games," he said. "*Iyong hiya, malakas pa rin ang* effect *sa mga* mayors (The mayors still feel embarrassed)."

Cruz's experience is shared by Mayor Francisco Mamba Jr. of Tuao, Cagayan.

During the anti-jueteng summit held on Oct. 24-25 in Dagupan, Mamba said even jueteng protectors—local government and police officials—had images to protect.

"We don't hit the collectors but the protectors. We named names and they stopped because they were embarrassed," Mamba said.

Officials, too, have to contend with pleas from bet collectors not to stop the games, their source of livelihood, until they have been offered alternative sources of living.

Mamba, however, did not believe in offering alternative livelihood to jueteng collectors. He merely told them not to count the number of families they were helping but to count those they were destroying because of jueteng.

Prayer power

Another priest believes in prayer power to stop jueteng.

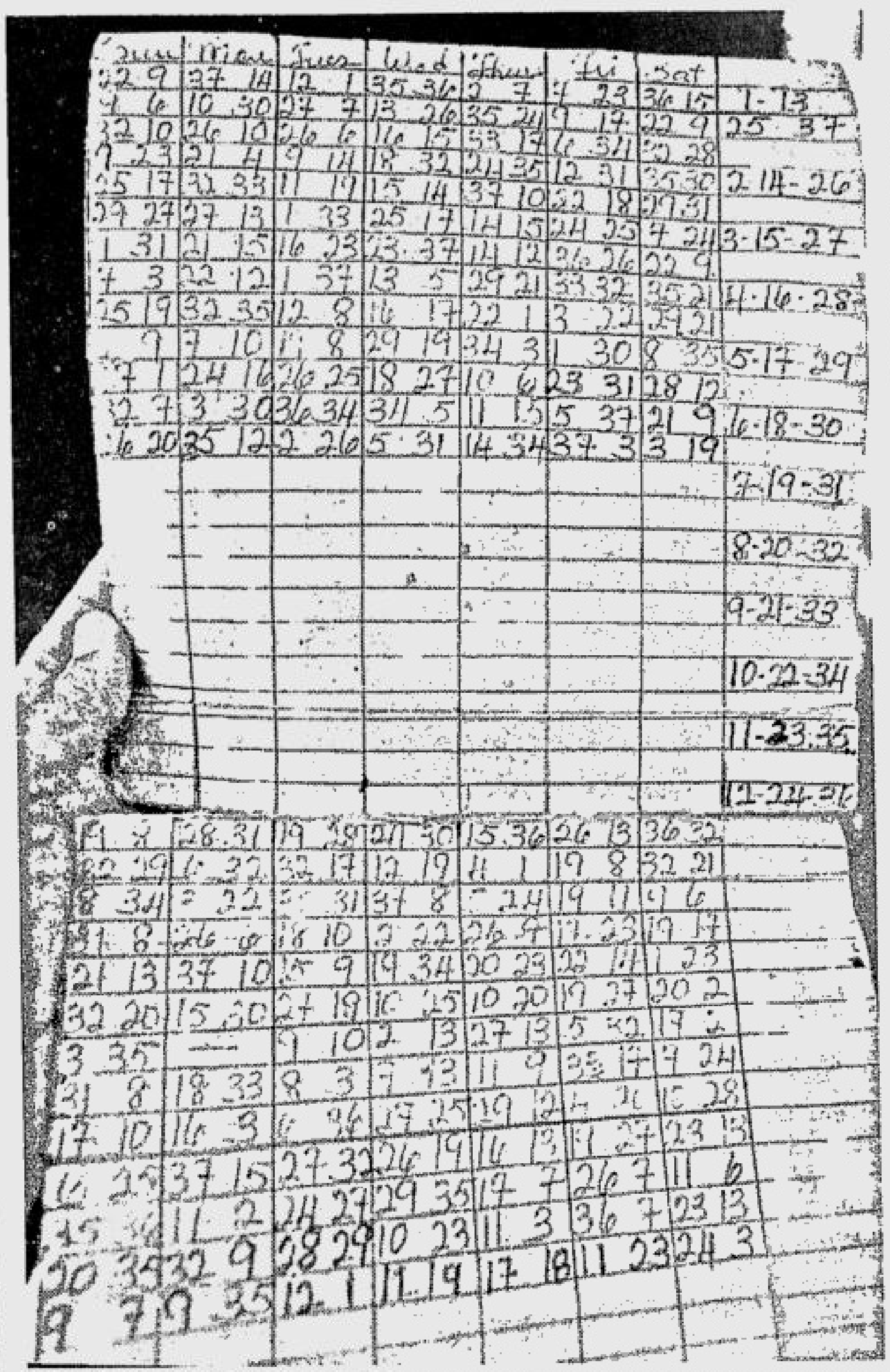
Rev. Gerry Bitoon of the Krusadang Bayan in San Pablo City in Laguna said the group had an "official prayer" against jueteng, hoping that it would drive away the evil behind the illegal numbers game.

Local officials in jueteng-free places do not believe that the numbers game has a positive effect on the economy.

Provincial administrator Virgilio Tiongson of Nueva Vizcaya said when jueteng was rampant in his place, 52 percent of the people were considered poor. But when it stopped, the figure went down to 11 percent.

"(This) should dispute the myth that stopping jueteng will make the people poor," Tiongson said.

Mayor Rolando Distura of Dumangas, Iloilo, disputed the claim of jueteng bet collectors that they were able to send their children to college through jueteng.



NUMBERS GAME: List of bets seized from a "jueteng" bet collector. JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

"I explained to them that it was their industry and tenacity that sent their children to school. I helped start some livelihood projects," Distura said.

Bulacan Rep. Wilfrido Villarama admitted that he was involved in jueteng operations in his province for two years during the Aquino administration, but he stopped because his conscience bothered him. What jolted him was the realization that jueteng was corrupting the local police.

"*Grabe ang bigay sa pulis* (The police take was too much). Imagine what will happen if that policeman becomes a general?" he said.

But for the police, it is okay if jueteng is stopped.

"*Tapatan lang* (Let's be honest). It's okay for us (police) if jueteng is stopped. But there must be a solution acceptable to all sectors of society, something that will really work," said Director General Hermogenes Ebdane Jr., Philippine National Police chief.

But Ebdane claimed that ridding the country of jueteng, a social menace since the Spanish times, was like ridding Colombia of cocaine. He said that for Colombians, planting coca (the source of cocaine) was an easy way to earn money.

What the bet collectors earn from the game of chance, however, is a pittance. If a *cobrador* collects P1,000 in bets, he receives 10 percent or P100, and the *cabo* (to whom the collectors remit their collections) gets 2 percent. They both get a certain percentage when their bettor wins.

Who then gets the biggest piece of the jueteng pie?

A former jueteng operator said it was the protectors who got a fixed amount monthly, even if collections were low.

"Thirty-four percent of the collection is appropriated for protection money and operational expenses. From the remaining 66 percent comes the prize money. But the operator can also lose because there are times when the winning amount is bigger than the collection. In a small town, for instance, an operator can collect only P50,000 a day. If somebody wins P100,000, the operator loses," he said.

The former jueteng operator, now an elected official in a central Pangasinan town, said many operators stopped operations because they could not pay the winning amount.

Another operator, a barangay captain, said he lost P2 million when he was starting in the illegal numbers game.

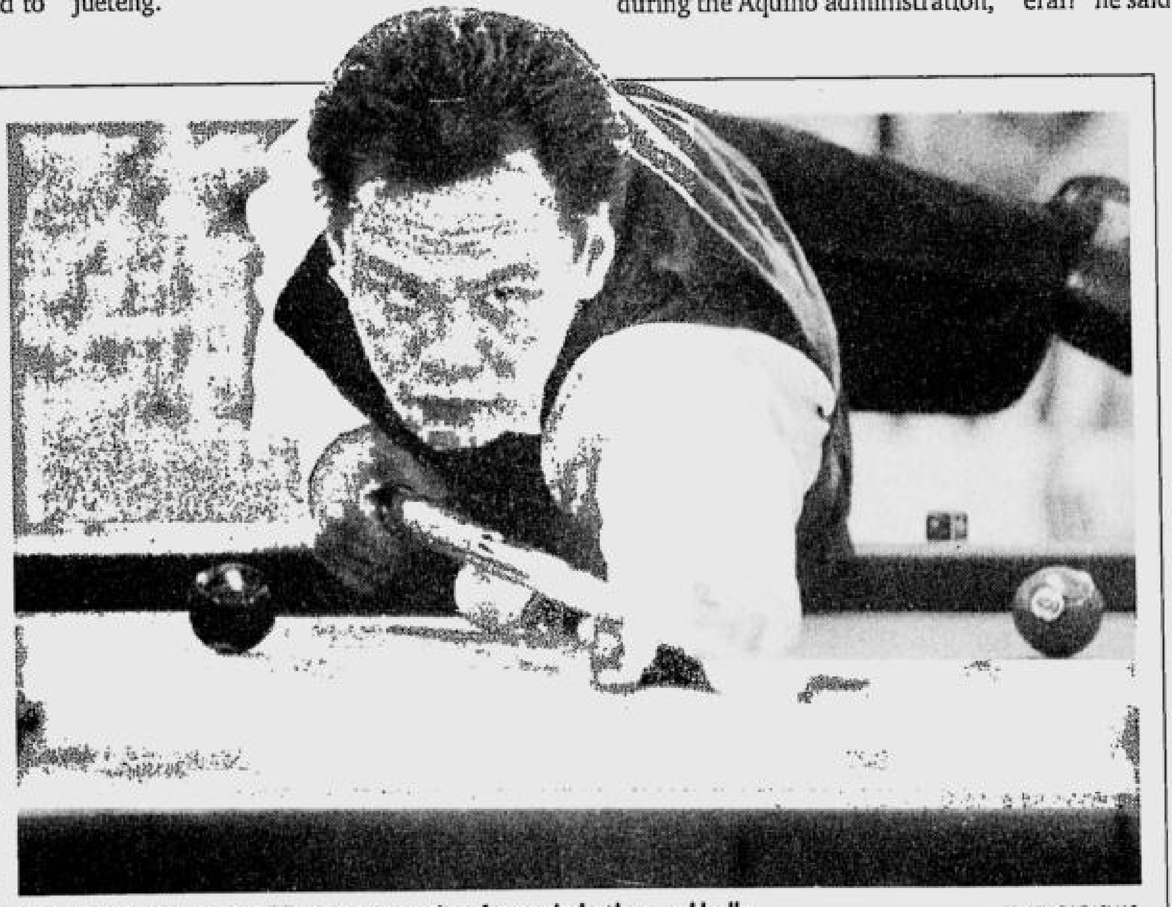
In one Pangasinan city, the mayor got only four percent (which he said he used to finance his "social obligations"), while the police got one percent of the daily collection.

"On days that the collection is P100,000, the mayors get P4,000 daily, while the police get P1,000 daily, which is divided among the town's policemen," a police official said.

"Whether they admit it or not, jueteng operators make money by manipulating the poor people to part with their hard-earned money. It is very seldom that a bettor wins, so the operator pockets the collection," Cruz said.

Django returns to native Tarlac

By Jo Clemente
Tarlac City



FRANCISCO "Django" Bustamante aims for a win in the pool hall. EDWIN BACASMAS

THERE is more to Francisco "Django" Bustamante than a sports story. His feat is inspiration enough for the common man to rise.

Among those who eagerly awaited Bustamante's homecoming in Tarlac last week were buddies from his old *bilyaran* (pool hall), most of them were at the Tarlac plaza to witness how Tarlac honored their friend.

Tarlaqueños came out of their homes and welcomed Bustamante, who returned to his native Tarlac City on Oct. 30 after his successful stint at the 14th Asian Games in Busan, South Korea.

Bustamante and fellow Tarlaqueño, Mikee Cojuangco-Jaworski, won two of the three gold medals earned by the Philippine delegation.

The province adopted the slogan "Proud to be a Tarlaqueño" to honor Bustamante and Cojuangco-Jaworski.

Eddie Catacutan, 54 is one of the mainstays at a *bilyaran* at the Tarlac public market. One of Bustamante's early mentors, Catacutan met Bustamante as a little boy of 12 who frequented the place as it is right beside a *carinderia* (eatery) managed by Bustamante's sister.

Catacutan remembers Bustamante as a young lad "*na malakas ang loob*" and with potentials to be good in the game. He said they eventually decided to field Bustamante in tournaments outside Tarlac.

From Tarlac, they would go to Pampanga and other provinces in Central Luzon, and then in Metro Manila and the rest of the country.

Catacutan, vice president of the Tarlac City Billiards Association, says he feels good about Bustamante's achievements.

"*Hindi siya nagbabago, mabait at hindi nakakalimot* (He never changes. He's kind and does not forget where he came from)," he says.

Jess Tuason, an employee at the Tarlac provincial capitol, was once a spotter (one who arranges balls in a pool table) in one of Bustamante's "practice sites."

He remembers how the caretaker of the pool hall would scold Bustamante.

"The caretaker would frequently scold Bustamante and prevent him from playing because he was young then," Tuason said. "*Praktis ka nang praktis*" was an old familiar line the caretaker would address Bustamante, Tuason recalls.

Bustamante, who was peddling banana cue and boiled peanuts then, would place his goods on a bench at the pool hall and then spend the rest of the day practicing, according to Tuason.

"*Noon pa lang may porma na ang tira* (He's got the winning form even at that early age)," Tuason said of Bustamante.

Fred Tolentino, who describes himself as a billiards enthusiast and a spectator at the *bilyaran*, remembers Bustamante as the boy who stacked up empty soft drinks cases as a platform so he could reach the billiard table.

He also recalls how the young Bustamante managed to squeeze in line to practice. Tolentino says Bustamante always got his turn to practice.

"Whenever there is an empty table, he would get at least three pieces of billiard balls already used by players from another table and then play by himself until another round would allow him again to get the used balls from another table's pockets," Tolentino says.

Homecoming

Amid showers of confetti and the festive music provided by the Northern Luzon marching band, Bustamante and top city and provincial officials motored through the city's main streets last week.

The motorcade ended at the city *plazuela* where a program, attended by Gov. Jose Yap, Rep. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III and Tarlac City Mayor Genaro Mendoza, was held to honor Bustamante.

Resolutions expressing the people's appreciation for the contribution of Bustamante and Cojuangco-Jaworski to Philippine sports and for bringing honor and prestige to the country and to Tarlac were read during the program.

Laoag City to open tourism night market

By Cristina Arzadon
Laoag City

THE NEXT time you visit Laoag City, don't ask where to buy the Ilocanos' authentic products. Rather, just sit back until night falls and you'll know how to get there.

Beginning December, more than a hundred Ilocano entrepreneurs will be marketing native products from hand-woven cloth (locally known as *inabel*), *basi* (native wine) *banga* (earthen jar) and other tourist find in what will be called as the "tourism night market."

Put together by the city tourism council, the night market intends to enhance tourist activities during the night and showcase the Ilocanos' quality products.

Councilor Jay Ramos, tourism council vice chair, said the night market would fill the lack of recreation when the evening falls and, in the process, divert tourists' attention from traditional night spots such as girlie bars or even gambling joints.

"We were inspired to put up this project by our Chinese friends. They put us on notice that there's no place to hang around during the night. So we drew the concept. Since there's a growing number of local and foreign tourists to the city, we now have an opportunity to fill their needs," he said.

Already, dozens of producers have started signing up for the night market. The city intends to invite non-Laoag entrepreneurs such as the makers of antique products of Vigan City to participate.

Sinking tower

The night market will be open on Wednesdays and Saturdays in a designated area beside a landmark structure right at the heart of the city, the sinking bell tower of Laoag.

Along with assorted merchandise, it will have coffee shops and snack bars that will be lumped together in three huge kiosks. Booths will be erected to accommodate local products.

Prices, however, will be slightly higher from the product rates during the day as an incentive to sellers toiling for the night.

Ramos has asked the city government to raise at least P400,000 to cover the cost of putting up the market trimmings such as lights, sound system, tents and booths, and a warehouse where the temporary structures will be kept during the day.

The city government, in turn, will charge concessionaires a minimal amount as rental fees for the booths that they will occupy.

"This would be a new system for the city. It should be a long-term plan that's why we are investing on it. As long as tourists are around, we have a market for this," Ramos said.

SINKiNG bell tower of Laoag. CRISTINA ARZADON

Legless graduate now a CPA, raring to start own business

HOMETOWN *Snapshots*

THE "legless graduate" from San Vicente, Ilocos Sur, is now a certified public accountant after she passed the board examination held last month.

Maryann Rosuman, 21, a cum laude graduate of the University of Northern Philippines this year, was among the 1,440 successful examinees, representing about 18 percent of the 8,000 who took the examinations.

Rosuman was born without legs but stood tall when she graduated last March. She uses a cane to support her body in walking or standing.

"I am happy that it (board examination) is already over. I will now look for a job," Rosuman told the INQUIRER.

She had to contend with her physical disability during the six months that she was reviewing for the examinations.

The review center, where she was enrolled in, was on the fifth floor of a building in Manila. Since the building had no elevator, she had no choice but to use the stairs, she said.

"It was hard during the initial days but somehow I got used to it," she said.

After reading her story in the INQUIRER, Energy Secretary Vicente Perez asked Rosuman to join the Department of Energy.

MARYANN Rosuman, cum laude graduate of the University of Northern Philippines, shows her many achievement medals. LEONCIO BALBIN JR.

Perez said he was impressed with Rosuman's dedication and resolve to succeed despite her physical disability. Rosuman said one of her plans is to call Perez and ask if the job offer still stands.

She said she also plans to start a business, like a computer rental shop. *Leoncio Balbin Jr.*

From health care to environment protection

TO HELP care for the people's health, officials and employees of a drug manufacturing firm have launched a mangrove reforestation project in Bolinao, Pangasinan, that will soon be replicated in other parts of the country.

Officials and employees of GlaxoSmithKline Philippines, which manufactures mostly prescription drugs, have identified a five-hectare coastal area in Barangay Victory where they started planting mangrove species last month.

"Before, all our community projects are health related, like anti-tuberculosis programs. Then we realized, 'How more can we help protect the people's health than by protecting their environment,'" said Grace Roxas, Glaxo's corporate affairs associate.

She said the project, "Mangroves for the Archipelago," is being piloted in Bolinao. "After we finish planting the five hectares, we will look for other sites," Roxas said.

The environmental group Haribon Foundation, which is helping fisherfolk organizations in Bolinao, identified the areas to be re-forested by the Glaxo employees. *Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes*

Changing lifestyles in the Cordillera

CORDILLERANS should reclaim and practice their indigenous health tradition as it would be more beneficial in maintaining the communities' health, especially mothers and women in childbearing age, a health officer in Mt. Province said.

Dr. Penelope Domogo, who researched on indigenous health practices in Mt. Province, said residents of Bontoc had retained much of their old health practices despite revolutionary methods in health care like modern diet practices and medicine.

Domogo's research findings, which were presented during a recent seminar of the Women's Health and Safe Motherhood Project-Partnerships Component, aimed to rediscover Bontoc's traditional methods that were considered better alternatives to Western medical practices.

Her research compared the present health profile of Bontoc residents with their health profile 15 years ago.

She said older Bontocs have a "healthier life span" than the present generation.

Domogo said the new generation of Bontocs was more prone to "lifestyle diseases," such as hypertension and diabetes, than their older counterparts. *Mark Thomas Manalang and Honey Beso*

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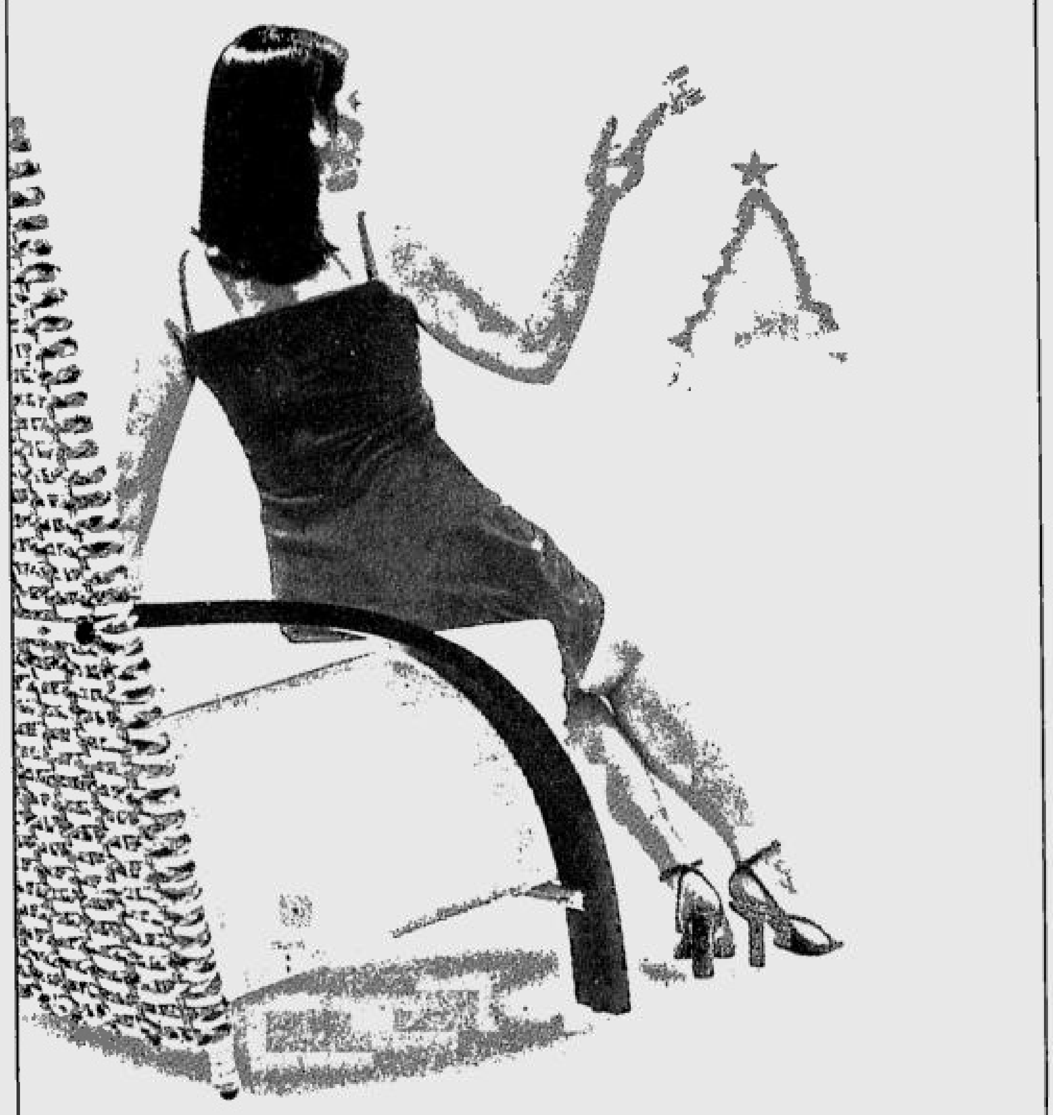
The 23rd Philippine Furniture Festival



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Asean leaders agree to meet in Bali

From page A1

our people peace of mind. It is also important to the stability of Asia," Ms Macapagal said. "The important thing is after four long years, we finally have an agreement," she added.

Security group

But an American expert on Asean matters said the regional association should convert itself from an economic grouping into a security organization due to the rising threat of terrorism in the region.

David Shambaugh, a professor at George Washington University, told the Singapore Straits Times the emergence of Southeast Asia as a second front in the global war against terrorism has made it necessary for Asean to give more attention to security.

"The activities of the al-Qaida and other groups indicate that the war on terrorism has two fronts: the Middle East and Southeast Asia," Shambaugh said. Suspicion has fallen on the Islamic militant group Jemaah Islamiyah, which is believed to be responsible for the Bali bombings.

Shambaugh said Indonesia, which is seen as the weakest link in the fight against terrorism, remained the biggest problem.

"It is apparent that the Megawati government had not pursued Islamic militant groups because of internal political reasons," said Shambaugh, referring to Indonesian President Megawati Sukarnoputri.

Shambaugh said the attack in Bali was a strike against a "cultural" target. "Terrorists are now attacking cultural targets as well as Western government targets," he said.

But Asean leaders did not formally pressure Indonesia to rein in radical Islamic groups suspected of terrorism during the summit.

"No, not at all. In fact there were messages of support for Indonesia's efforts, as well as those of the Philippines, to deal with terrorism in their midst," outgoing Asean Secretary General Rodolfo Severino said.

A Malaysian diplomat said his country had privately talked to Indonesia in recent weeks about stepping up efforts against terrorism, but that Asean as a group would not publicly confront Indonesia. "As a bloc, the issue will not be raised," he said.

Fighting the scourge

Severino said it was necessary to "modulate" the counterterrorist response. "We have to deal with the scourge of terrorism because it is harming the economies, and of course because of the cost to human life and property,"

But he said too strong a response could cause a backlash in some countries and promote more terrorism.

"We should modulate our response so that the economies and societies of Southeast Asia are not damaged. Otherwise we will be playing into the hands of the terrorists," Severino said.

Asean's new secretary general, whose appointment was approved at the summit, acknowledged that it will be difficult to rein in extremists.

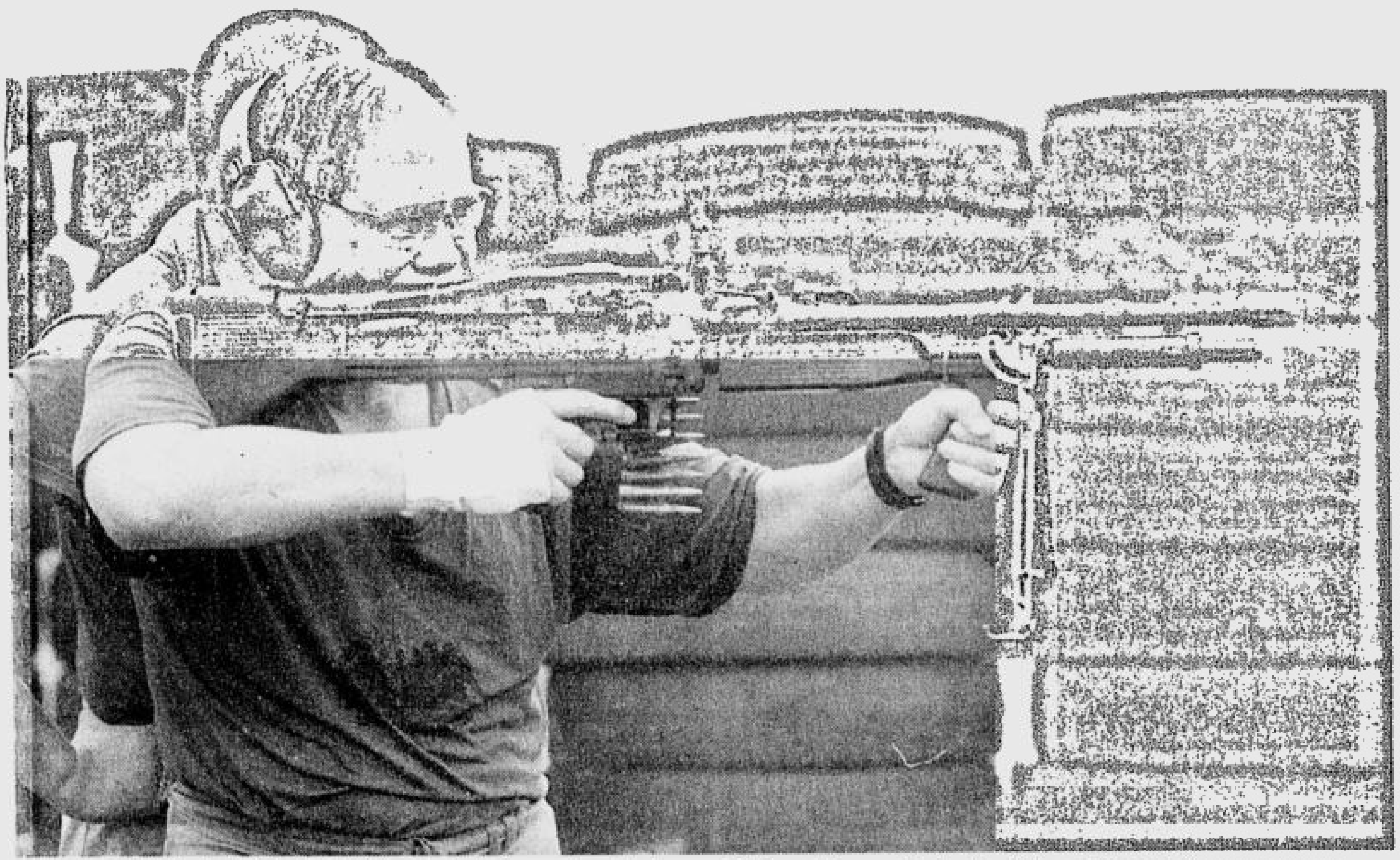
"We have been living in such an easy, comfortable climate for so many years," Ong Keng Yong said. "To get someone to suddenly switch and get very strict and look at every dustbin and parked car is a different culture for us."

Summit highlights

Aside from the counter-terrorism declaration, the leaders also called war in Iraq "a matter of grave concern" that could destabilize Asia and the entire global economy, and said the United Nations should play a central role in any enforcement of UN resolutions.

The Asean leaders also agreed with their counterparts from China, Japan and South Korea—who joined the conference—that North Korea should scrap its recently revealed nuclear weapons program, which they called a threat to all of Asia.

Asean, founded in 1967 to strengthen regional economic cooperation, is made up of Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Burma, Thailand, the Philippines, Singapore and Vietnam. *With reports from AP, AFP, Dona Pazzibugan*



ON TARGET is the AFP Chief of Staff Benjamin Defensor Jr. as he fires an M60 machine gun during the 46th anniversary of the Philippine Navy's elite Naval Special Warfare Group held at Sangley Point, Cavite City on Tuesday.

BOY CABRIDO

Coup plotters plan December putsch

From page A1

He showed text messages circulated among officers, warning each other about the coup. "Mate, *pasensiya na lang* (I'm sorry)," said a message from one Army officer to his classmate in Camp Aguinaldo, headquarters of the Armed Forces of the Philippines. The officer told his classmate that "they" had already mobilized two battalions. "We may have to part ways," the message said.

Coup scenarios

Lt. Col. Mike Manquiquis, Army spokesperson, confirmed that there had been "discussions" about "possible scenarios" in case of a coup attempt. "We've made academic discussions and anybody can plan but nobody will join them and they will not succeed," he said.

Manquiquis said "any plot" would need some "minimum requirements" of a few battalions "near to the objective." He assured "nobody will join any move, and those who were involved before would be the first to ask anyone not to join the move."

The coup jitters were fueled by the delay in the increase in the soldier's pay. The increase was effective Oct. 22.

Ric Blancaflor, defense assistant secretary for personnel, said the partial increase, an average of P600 per soldier, was the first installment in the three-tiered salary standardization for members of the armed forces. The second installment, an average of P800 per soldier, will be given in January. The last installment of P1,500 will be given in January 2004.

The issue of salaries was also raised during the 1987 and 1989 coup attempts which almost toppled the Aquino administration.

Coup rumors have been going around the camps since mid-October. But as early as September, some military officers allegedly approached a Makati businessman to solicit his support. "The President could not last until December," the officers reportedly told the businessman.

The "recruiters" were said to be mentioning corruption and the worsening economy in enticing soldiers to join them.

There are also reports circulating in military camps that Gen. Benjamin P. Defensor, AFP chief of staff, was poised to lead a coup that would install a military junta.

Defensor denied that he was plotting a coup. "How can I lead a coup when I don't even have the permission from my wife? That's how brave we are here," Defensor said.

"We will not allow anyone to use the Armed Forces to change the government. We have been through that exercise," he said.

Defensor's extension

Officers close to Defensor said the coup rumors were being spread by officials in the Department of National Defense "who do not want Defensor to be given another extension."

If he is not given another "extension" by Ms Macapagal, Defensor will have to bow out from the service on Nov. 18, or after only 69 days at the top military post.

Defensor earlier said the extension, which came with his appointment as AFP chief of staff on Sept. 10, two days before he reached his mandatory retirement age of 56, was a bonus.

A Malacañang source said Ms Macapagal was considering the extension of Defensor's tour of duty. The source volunteered the information when asked who among the three-star generals the President would pick to replace Defensor when he retires on Nov. 18.

"General Defensor will be extended first," the source said. He refused to provide the reason for the extension.

An extension of Defensor's term may not prejudice the chances of three-star generals waiting in line, given Ms Macapagal's perceived policy of giving senior generals a first crack at the top military post.

A source in the military community said that if Defensor's term was extended until the end of 2002, the other generals would have as much time as he had at the top military post.

Army chief Lt. Gen. Dionisio Santiago is due to retire in April 2003. If he is next in line, he will have a four-month tour of duty starting January.

Lt. Gen. Gregorio Camiling, currently AFP vice chief of staff and the number two man in the AFP hierarchy, will reach retirement age in November 2003. Lt. Gen. Narciso Abaya, currently chief of the Southern Command, retires in late 2004.

Many officers think Defensor's appointment as the AFP chief in September showed that Ms Macapagal "has the balls and the fiercely independent mind of a real commander-in-chief."

"She is not a puppet of anyone, much less of Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes," a general said. If Reyes had his way, he would have wanted Lt. Gen. Narciso Abaya to succeed General Roy Cimatu, according to the general.

Reyes, under fire for allegations that he was using his post to perpetuate himself in power, yesterday came out challenging his critics to come out in the open and file charges against him.

At a press briefing, Reyes also said that the "demolition job" against him was mounted by people with "nothing to do." *With a report from Martin P. Marfil*

Defensor rides slow speedboat to Sangley

From page A1

Philippine Fleet; and, Lt. Commander Rosauro Sarmiento, chief of the Naval Special Warfare Group (SWAG).

After what seemed like "eternity" in the middle of nowhere, the engine was revived. Hingco said a piece of plastic got entangled with the propeller.

The newsmen on another speedboat were not so lucky. Restarting the engine took some time. By the time it sputtered back to life, the activity the newsmen were scheduled to cover was all over.

"We got the message and we will react to that," Defensor said in a speech as guest of honor at SWAG's 46th anniversary celebration.

Defensor received his honorary badge as member of SWAG after undergoing a "crash" course on SEALS (Sea, Air and Land Services) operation for less than an hour. From the speedboat, Defensor swam 10 meters ashore and ran to the firing range with the mock targets.

A regular training for SWAG, known as the most physically demanding training operations in the military, takes from six to eight months. The elite group has a little over a hundred members.

SWAG played a key role in the June 21 encounter between government forces and Abu Sayyaf bandits off the coast of Sirawai, Zamboanga del Norte, where Abu Sayyaf spokesperson Aldam Tilao, popularly known as Abu Sabaya, was believed killed. His body has not been found, however.

The SWAG unit involved in the encounter was awarded a Certificate of Merit during the ceremonies Tuesday.

A Bronze Cross was given to a SWAG explosives and ordnance team that detonated a bomb attached to a car parked near the Cavite Provincial Capitol in May.

THE PRESIDENT'S first grandchild, Mikaela Gloria Arroyo, was born by Cesarean section at a little past 11 p.m., Nov. 5 at the Makati Medical Center.

TV FILM GRAB/ABS-CBN

Gloria now Angel's 'lola'

From page A1

5 of their first-born, chinky-eyed, creamy-skinned Mikaela Gloria. Weeks before she was born at the Makati Medical Center, her father was already calling her Angel.

Together with his father, Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo, Mikey was in the United States where they had joined President Macapagal-Arroyo's entourage. Mikey remained in the United States to meet prospective investors in Pampanga and at the Clark Special Economic Zone.

Neither was the President around for the birth of her first grandchild. She was in Cambodia for the Asean summit.

New pa arrives today

Mikey reportedly canceled all his appointments in the United States and hopped on the first available flight to Manila when he was informed of the birth of his daughter.

He's expected to be back in Manila today (Wednesday Mikey and Angela had expected the baby to come in the last week of November. The couple was wed last June 24 in the Macapagal hometown of Lubao, Pampanga.

Angela was terribly pained by labor cramps but found comfort in prayers, close friends of Mikey said.

Two aides of the vice governor said that before 7 p.m. Monday, Angela was still making up her mind on whether to have a normal delivery or go under the knife.

Named after lola, lolo

The name, Mikaela Gloria, is derived from the names of the first couple.

"*Bigla akong tumanda* (I suddenly feel old)," an excited Mr. Arroyo told a morning TV talk show. "I can no longer deny I'm a grandfather."

Upon learning of Mikaela Gloria's birth, the elder Arroyo said he sent a text message to his wife: "Congratulations to the new *lola*."

In an interview with the INQUIRER three weeks ago, Mikey said he was certain that Mikaela Gloria would give joy especially to the President.

"My *nanay* has been very excited about this angel. She said she'll take some time off to personally nurse her and dress her up," Mikey said.

Mementos

From boxes where she had carefully kept the family's mementos, the President had taken out Mikey's baby clothes and wooden crib.

Mikey said his mother had these washed and the crib dusted and its comforter and pillow replaced for Mikaela Gloria.

These, as well as everything that the newborn needs, are in a nursery in Malacañang, Mikey said.

Rocking chair, golf

He wanted a rocking chair placed right next to the baby's crib so he and Angela could watch over "our angel."

He said his father had volunteered to teach Mikaela Gloria "how to play golf as soon as she can play."

Mikey said Angela would breastfeed the baby as long as necessary.

Angela, Mikey's second cousin, gained a lot of weight from eating chocolate cakes and fruits while she was pregnant, a stage that Mikey described as "not too difficult."

"She has been very understanding of my work. She never demanded more time while she was pregnant," he said.

Time out for parenting

But his London-schooled wife, he added, wanted him to take time off for parenting.

"Which I would do. My father did that for me, Dato and Luli when we were growing up," Mikey said.

Ramadan…

From page A1

peace-loving," said Aleem (Muslim learned) and radio host Anwar Basher of the Agama Islam Society based in Quiapo.

The past year, Muslim communities have been complaining of a "terrorist image painted by media" as a "backlash of the al-Qaida linked to the WTC (World Trade Center) attack."

As a response, a group called Young Moro Professionals (YMP) said it wanted "to bridge the information and communication divide" by providing materials about Muslims on the Internet. "Fasting trains the Muslim to develop self-discipline and to practice moderation in all his actions," writes UP law student Imee Biruar of the YMP on her research on Ramadan.

Texting by cell phone has been used by young Muslims to communicate greetings of "Happy Ramadan/Fasting."

Ramadan this year falls at the same time that Mindanao NGOs are preparing celebrations for Peace Week from Nov. 26-Dec. 3.

Abstinence

Fasting is one of the five pillars of Islam. For Muslims, it means complete abstinence from eating, drinking and sexual activity from dawn until sunset for the 30 days of Ramadan.

During this period, Muslim homes are up by 3 a.m. preparing for breakfast to end an hour later, just before the *adhzan* (call to prayer) at *Subuh* (first prayer). Fast is broken about 6 p.m. with a meal.

Muslims continue their usual day activities despite the avoidance of food and water.

The last 10 days of the fast are especially regarded as holy. The Lailatul Qadr or Night of Power marks the period when the Holy Quran was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad and some Muslims pray all night.

Basher, also a member of the Ortigas-based NGO, Peacemaker's Circle, advised Muslims to get involved in "peacemaking and invite Christians to their homes."

On Oct. 28, a National Conference on Inter-faith Dialogue was held at the Asian Institute of Management (AIM). The guest speaker, Oxford Director for Islamic Studies, Dr. Farham Nizami, advised Filipinos to "promote harmony amid diversity." Mindanao Youth Commissioner Christopher Arnuco said this holy season was a time for Zamboangueños (whose city is beset by bombings) to visit each other's homes especially on Eidl Fitr, a festive event which marks the last day of fast.

National holiday?

Urban Poor Commissioner Norhata Alonto, one of the proponents of declaring Eidl Fitr a national holiday, said she reminded President Macapagal to declare Dec. 6 a national holiday. Last year, it was the first time a President issued an executive Order providing Eidl Fitr as a national holiday.

During the celebrations of Eid'l Fitr in this country, Muslims dress in their colorful native or Islamic attire and converge for the 6-7 a.m. prayers in major mosques in the country. Charity amounting to 2.5 percent of one's salary is given to the poor. After this, they share "feasts with family and friends."

100 Jemaah Islamiah agents in Mindanao

From page A1

COMBAT-READY elements of the MILF are shown in this file photo taken at Camp Abubakar in Maguindanao. PDI PHOTO

US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Matthew Daley (right) gestures at a news conference in Manila on Tuesday. A dream of a Pan Islamic state in Southeast Asia is beyond the reach of Muslim radicals linked to al-Qaida because they are in the minority and lack political support, the senior US diplomat said. At left is US Ambassador to the Philippines Francis Ricciardone. REUTERS

Gonzales said there were about 100 al-Qaida and Jemaah Islamiah operatives in Mindanao, whom he described as "former MILF members who have been enticed by terrorism."

"Their arrest is only a matter of time," he said. "Once this is carried out, we would have broken the back of international terrorism's link in the Philippines," he said.

Gonzales' disclosure, however, contradicted a statement by presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao who earlier said that al-Qaida and Jemaah Islamiah leaders had passed through the Philippines but did not establish cells or strong links with local Islamic extremists.

"It is not confirmed there are actual cells," Tiglao told reporters on Monday.

More contradictions

Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Benjamin Defensor also contradicted Tiglao on Tuesday, saying Jemaah Islamiah had operated a cell from inside Camp Abubakar, the main MILF camp that was overrun by the military in 2000.

"It is sobering to realize that the Jemaah Islamiah has been operating through four major units, covering Borneo, Brunei, Sarawak, Sabah, Sulawesi and southern Philippines—and that one unit was, in fact, originally based in Camp Abubakar," he said.

Defensor said he had met with military chiefs from the Asia-Pacific region over the weekend in Singapore, and they had agreed that Jemaah Islamiah was emerging as a "common threat among Southeast Asian countries."

According to intelligence officials, Jemaah Islamiah wants to establish an Islamic superstate spanning Malaysia, Indonesia and parts of the southern Philippines and northern Australia.

An alleged Jemaah Islamiah bomber, Indonesian Fathur Rohman al-Ghozie, earlier told investigators that he had trained in bomb making in Camp Abubakar. Al-Ghozie was arrested early this year and subsequently convicted and sentenced to 12 years imprisonment for illegal possession of explosives.

Untouched

The MILF has been largely left untouched by the government's antiterror operations, although there have been sporadic clashes between the military and the rebel group.

The 12,000-strong MILF signed a ceasefire pact with the government last year, setting the stage for the resumption of peace talks aimed at ending its rebellion.

US intelligence reports, however, indicate that al-Qaida and Jemaah Islamiah leaders had contacts with the MILF and that their fighters had received training in MILF camps.

Kabalu branded the reports as lies, saying the MILF was open to any investigation regarding its alleged links to al-Qaida and Jemaah Islamiah.

"We are pursuing negotiations with the government, which is something terrorists don't do," he said.

Kabalu on Sunday said the United States was out to crush all militant Islamic organizations in the region.

Reacting to Kabalu's accusations, US Deputy Assistant State Secretary Matthew Daley on Tuesday said "Washington does not see the war on terrorism as a war on Islam."

Soft targets

In a talk with Manila-based foreign correspondents, Daley warned that the al-Qaida terror network and its allies were looking for "soft targets" for their next attack and were actively searching for a new base after being rooted out of Afghanistan.

Daley said antiterror efforts in Southeast Asia should focus on law enforcement, intelligence cooperation and working together to block terrorists' funding.

"All of us are vulnerable. We have to be very alert because these groups will take advantage of the opportunity to attack at any weak spot," Daley said.

"They've shown an ability to shift their focus from targets that are well defended and alert to targets that are less well defended. They are looking for softer targets. That's what they did in Bali."

The Jemaah Islamiah has been blamed for the Oct. 12 bombings on the Indonesian island resort of Bali killing nearly 200 people, mostly Western tourists. It was the second most deadly terrorist attack since Sept. 11 last year when al-Qaida operatives struck in the United States, killing thousands and destroying the World Trade Center in New York..

Daley said that since al-Qaida was blasted out of Afghanistan, its operatives had been exerting "multipronged efforts" to establish a new base. He declined to name specific countries being eyed.

"Suffice it to say we are trying to follow them as carefully as we can and to pick them up wherever they appear, and we've had some successes as you know," Daley added.

Daley said the recent US warning on the possibility of terrorist bombings in other Southeast Asian countries was part of precautions in the face of the threats and was not meant to stop American citizens from visiting the region.

At the same time, Daley belittled the capability of Jemaah Islamiah to achieve its aim of setting up a pan-Islamic state in the region.

"I don't see these organizations as having the capability to shake countries apart. I don't believe they have the capability to disaggregate the states of the region and to form a new entity. That's well beyond their reach," Daley said.

But he recognized Jemaah Islamiah's capability to inflict damage on people and commerce. *With reports by AP and AFP*

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KING NORODOM SIHANOUK (2nd from left) and beside him, Queen Monineath Sihanouk, receive leaders of the Asean including President Macapagal (2nd from right) at the Royal Palace in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

JERYY CARUAL/MALACAÑANG PHOTO

Not Anna and the King, but Mega, Gloria

From page A1

Insiders said Sihanouk, backed by a band, sang up to 12 songs with at least one tune from each country at the banquet for the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations group, which met here for its annual summit.

Toward the end of the evening the king danced with several first ladies and then Indonesian President Megawati Sukarnoputri.

"She was most impressed," a palace insider said, "to the point where Megawati demanded an encore from the monarch."

Sihanouk swiftly obliged and took the hand of President Macapagal-Arroyo, who had become a grandmother that night.

"He was most gracious," the insider said. "In most countries the monarch is entertained but in Cambodia the king was amazingly gracious and he entertained his guests until the late hours." Sihanouk celebrated his 80th birthday last week and recently returned from China where he underwent routine medical checks. He suffers from diabetes and colon cancer.

"The king looked well, was spontaneous, witty and vibrant. In fact he looked 20 years younger," one senior diplomat said. *AFP*

GMA slams US, West for travel advisories

From page A1

Japan, South Korea and China for lately being the region's biggest source of tourists.

Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon said in a chance interview that despite the negative travel advisories, the Japanese, Koreans and Chinese were continuing to visit the Philippines and other Asean countries.

The United States, Britain and even Japan have advised against travel to the region, citing the likelihood of more terrorist attacks.

US Department of State spokesperson Richard Boucher said Monday that the US government had a responsibility to warn Americans about potential dangers they might face while abroad, and would not shy away from warning its citizens when necessary.

"We have an obligation to tell Americans about the situation there," Boucher told reporters in Washington. "We do that in our travel warnings and announcements and deal with the security situation around the world as it affects Americans."

He added: "It's terrorist action and the threat of terrorist action that is of concern to the travelers. We try to tell travelers what they can do to remain vigilant and avoid that."

Boucher acknowledged that Washington had received complaints from countries about the warnings, including from members of Asean.

Ms Macapagal had earlier announced in Phnom Penh that Manila would host an international conference on tourism recovery and antiterrorism on Nov. 8.

Asean leaders the other day issued a declaration slamming Western nations for portraying the region as unsafe.

They said there was no "established evidence to substantiate rumors of possible terrorist attacks," and that issuing negative travel advisories "could only help achieve the objectives of the terrorists."

Boucher indicated that it was not the warnings that caused the downturn in tourism, but rather the terrorist attacks themselves.

"We certainly understand their economic difficulties that result from the terrorism that has occurred in this region," he said. "We've said there, as we have said elsewhere, that we have an obligation to tell Americans about the security situation."

Jemaah Islamiah

In Manila, Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Benjamin Defensor yesterday said the threat posed by the Indonesian-based Jemaah Islamiah has pushed 22 Asian and Pacific military chiefs to decide to confer more frequently in an effort to strengthen ties and forge a unified front against terrorism.

Defensor, who had just come from a three-day conference with the other military chiefs in Singapore, said at a press briefing that they arrived at the decision "inasmuch as the terrorist threat in our part of the world is at a heightened stage."

He also said the threat posed by the Jemaah Islamiah had produced a "sobering" effect on the military chiefs, and that the conference resulted in an agreement to exchange intelligence information and "expertise."

According to Defensor, the Jemaah Islamiah has been operating through "major units" covering Borneo, Brunei, Sarawak, Sabah, Sulawesi and Mindanao.

At another briefing, Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes said the US announcement that the Philippines was becoming a "terrorist haven" should not bother Filipinos.

He described the announcement as a mere statement that was lower than a warning or a travel advisory. *With reports from Martin P. Marfil, AFP*

Ople denies . . .

From page A1

Germany, one of the 15 EU members, might be subject to a "special procedure" that could cause a delay of a week to 10 days.

"(But) I have been assured by the German foreign ministry that legitimate visitors from the Philippines will not be affected. This issue was taken up during my bilateral meetings with German officials in Berlin," Ople said in a statement sent from Phnom Penh.

INQUIRER columnist Amando Doronila earlier wrote that President Macapagal-Arroyo's aggressive endorsement of the US campaign to open an Asian "front" against terrorism had "sparked a backlash" in the European Union.

Citing reliable sources in the diplomatic community, Doronila said the European Union was considering the blacklisting of the Philippines as a terrorist haven, along with Indonesia, Pakistan and Afghanistan.

He said this would result in tight restrictions on the issuance to Filipinos of Schengen visas, which allow holders to enter any of the EU countries except the United Kingdom.

But National Security Adviser Roilo Golez yesterday said there was no reason for the European Union to consider blacklisting the Philippines.

"Our counterterror program is the model in Southeast Asia, and people from other countries in fact come here to learn from us. I see no reason why we should be tagged as a terrorist haven," Golez said in a phone interview.

He cited as one proof Manila's hosting of an antiterrorism seminar on Nov. 8-9 that would see the participation of experts not only from Asean countries but also "the best from Australia and the United States."

Golez said it was up to the Department of Foreign Affairs to determine whether the European Union was indeed planning to blacklist the Philippines.

"What we have right now is an analysis and a sketchy report," he noted.

Ople said "agents" of the communist-led National Democratic Front were spreading the report of the supposed EU plan to tag the Philippines as a terrorist haven and to impose visa restrictions on Filipinos.

"Certainly, a visa ban will apply to persons connected with the Communist Party of the Philippines, the New People's Army and the NDF," he said.

He also said he had received reports that Jose Luneta, a longtime associate of NDF chief political consultant Jose Ma. Sison, was in Bonn seeking asylum.

"We urged Germany to deny him sanctuary, and I am confident they will listen to us," Ople said.

The European Union recently included Sison and the NPA in its terrorist list, upon the lobbying of a top-level mission headed by Ople and sent by Ms Macapagal.

'Axis of evil'

A ranking DFA official told the INQUIRER that there was no process under which countries could label others as "terrorist havens."

The official said the nearest thing to that label was the "axis of evil," a phrase that US President George W. Bush used to blacklist some Middle East countries in the aftermath of the attacks in the United States on Sept. 11, 2001.

"Countries take pains in making their advisories so that the subject countries would not be offended. The European Union declaring the Philippines as a terrorist haven is unthinkable," the official said.

Ople said European governments had generally been strengthening their immigration defenses for fear of infiltration by terrorists.

"There is a worldwide paranoia about terrorism," he said.

Ople said that under the "special procedure" for visitors to Germany, the applications would be transmitted to the home office in Berlin "for further scrutiny, especially if there is ground to believe that the applicant may be associated with terrorism."

So far, only Germany has instituted the special procedure for those visiting from Southeast Asia.

The other countries covered by the Schengen visa are Austria, Belgium, Greece, Denmark, Iceland, Spain, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Finland, France and Sweden.

Philippine experience

Golez pointed out that other Asean nations were "seeking to learn from (the Philippines') experience in dealing with terror."

"We have a comprehensive program, and we can cite concrete results like the apprehension and conviction of Dwikarna and Al-Ghozi in the Philippines," he said.

He was referring to Indonesians Agus Dwikarna and Fathur Rohman Al-Ghozi, both linked to the supposed terrorist group Jemaah Islamiah and currently serving sentences for possession of explosives.

Golez said that while the Philippines had its own home-grown terrorist group like the Abu Sayyaf, "(its members) are confined in a small part of the country, particularly Basilan and Sulu."

He also cited the killing last June of Abu Sayyaf spokesperson Abu Sabaya in a clash with the military off the coast of Zamboanga del Norte.

"There is, of course, no fail-safe antiterrorist program, but the Philippines is a model in the region," Golez said.

But Teodoro Casiño, secretary general of the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan, called on the House and Senate foreign affairs committees to require Golez, Ople, and Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes to explain the supposed EU plan to blacklist the country.

"The Philippine government's terror-mongering and vilification campaign against the country's biggest national liberation movement is backfiring," he said, adding:

"This is what we get from a government that dubs as 'terrorist' or 'communist' anyone and everyone who opposes it and its pro-imperialist policies and programs."

'Stupidity'

Casiño said the EU could not be blamed for viewing the Philippines as a terrorist haven because the Philippine and US governments had labelled as terrorist the 10,000 communist guerrillas operating in 60 of the country's 73 provinces.

"The entire country is now viewed as a terror haven," he said. "This is a product of the government's stupidity and incompetence in dealing with real terrorists. This proves that the campaign of lies and omission against Sison and the NPA has limits and has obviously backfired."

Casiño pointed out that the communists, through the NDF, had talked peace and signed 10 agreements with the government since 1992.

"Certainly, we cannot accept their being branded as terrorists, equal to the Abu Sayyaf, the al Qaida or the suicide bombers in Palestine," he said. *With a report from Gerald G. Lacuarta*

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Wind Blown heads Breeders' Cup cast

By Edwin Villanueva

WIND Blown, the country's foremost galloper, is plunging back to action when he leads the star-studded cast seeing action in the country's No. 1 horse racing festival–the Marho Breeders' Cup Championships–kicking off Nov. 13 at the Santa Ana Park.

A total pot of more than P7 million will be up for grabs in the seventh running of the racefest put up by the premiere horseracing group Metropolitan Association of Race Horse Owners under Aristeo "Putch" Puyat (president) and Leonardo "Sandy" Javier (chair).

Dubbed "the mother of all local races," this year's Marho Breeders' Cup features six major races, with the Classic serving as its highlight.

Wind Blown is competing in the Classic where he is tipped to meet the likes of Batangas Entry, Lyonnais and Staunch Ally. Hermie Esguerra's champion charger last competed in the inaugural Speaker's Cup (Oct. 13) wherein he set a new record over 2,050 meters.

PUYAT

Also expected to draw attention is the battle in the Juvenile Colts where High Octane, Diktador and Security Master, three of the fast-rising runners in the division, are tipped to crowd each other for first place.

The Marho Breeders' Cup, patterned after the renowned annual US championships, has also lined up hostilities in the Juvenile Fillies, 3-Year-Old Colts, 3-Year-Old Fillies and Sprint.

"We would like to invite all racing fans to witness this year's Breeders' Cup festival. *Umasa kayo na bakbakan na naman dito* from start to finish," said Puyat, also acknowledged as the founder of the Philippine Breeders' Cup.

Probable starters in the Juvenile Fillies include Tatler Cover, Twister, Shining Pyramid, Brainchild, Flying Machine and Doña Gelay, while Mighty Strong, San Diego Force, Bidang Bida and Perfect Storm are expected to be fielded in the 3YO Colts.

Golden Ballet is among those picked in the 3YO Fillies but she may face a strong opposition from recent Sampaguita Stakes winner What A Spell.

The Sprint is also highly anticipated because well-known speedballs Arriba King and Hazmoore are likely to cross paths anew.

Aside from the six majors, Marho has also programmed special invitational premium races with guaranteed prizes of P150,000 to P200,000 from Nov. 13 up to Nov. 17, the final day of the festival.

'Media' prevails

MELBOURNE, Australia—Damien Oliver rode Irish galloper Media Puzzle to an emotional Melbourne Cup triumph Tuesday, dedicating the win to his brother who died in a racing accident a week earlier.

Media Puzzle went around the final bend alongside Vinnie Roe with about 600 meters (yards) to race and stormed ahead in the straight to win by two lengths from Mr. Prudent and Beekeeper.

The winning time of 3 minutes, 16.9 was one of the quickest in 142 editions of Australia's richest horse race. *AP*

Active chess finals slated

A TOTAL of 48 participants representing the cream of the country's chess talents in the 20-under and 14-below age groups are set to fight for top honors and P67,000.00 cash prizes in the grand finals of the 2002 Shell National Youth Active Chess Championships.

The much-awaited chess battle unreels from Nov. 8 to 10 at the 4th floor Bridge level of SM Megamall in Mandaluyong City. The 12-round Swiss-system tournament is sanctioned by the National Chess Federation of the Philippines (NCFP).

PSC chair Eric Buhain and Pilipinas Shell vice president for corporate affairs Benito Bernardo Jr. are expected to grace the opening rites.

Bickerings

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

PHILIPPINE sports is not making any progress in recent years because sports officials, including leaders of the Philippine Olympic Committee, are always locked in conflict.

For example, during the last Congressional hearing, tennis president Col. Buddy Andrada assailed the POC, now headed by Celso Dayrit, for its "leadership without direction."

Once a staunch supporter of the POC chief, Andrada questioned the POC decision to allow only one tennis player instead of the four it requested to go to the recent Asian Games in Busan, complaining that tennis was left out in favor of softball which did not win a single game in the Asiad. The money wasted (P1.6 million) on the softball team could have been wisely spent for three additional tennis players to form a full squad that would have given the tennisters the opportunity of playing in at least seven matches each such as the singles, doubles and mixed doubles events, the outspoken tennis boss said.

Most recently, Andrada again took to task Dayrit for "abandoning" marathon in favor of golf and bowling in his formal appeal for reconsideration to organizers of next year's SEA Games in Vietnam who scrapped these events from the 32-event calendar. "Dayrit, being the father of the POC, must fight for all the national sports associations," Andrada said.

"We are throwing away two sure gold medals by not formally appealing for marathon where we are the defending champions," added a visibly frustrated athletics president Go Teng Kok. "It's not fair to Roy (Vence) and Christabel (Martes) who won the gold medals in the last SEA Games in Kuala Lumpur. They deserve to go. Most of all, it's not fair to the country. I hope it's not because Mr. Dayrit does not like me."

And speaking of the POC, how true is the report that Dayrit and some NSA officials, including Romy Ribaño of squash and Benjie Ramos of rowing, brought their wives with them to Busan reportedly to do some shopping, using the official cars assigned to the athletes?

Why are sports leaders like that?

Wives should stay home and pray for the success, but not be a burden to the team," Julian Malonso, former president of the POC, once said. "Bringing their wives to international competitions divides the attention of the officials instead of concentrating in the needs of the athletes." During our time, added the 78-year-old Malonso, sports officials like the late Antonio de las Alas and Senator Ambrosio Padilla did not bring their wives. Only Serafin Aquino and Fernando Bautista brought their wives who included them in the delegation as team chaperons. There were others who broke the rule by bringing their girlfriends and queridas to international meets, but this was very embarrassing because, in some occassions," protocol had to be broken. "I believe wives of officials should not be included in future international competitions. Much more their queridas," Malonso stressed. "This is a shame."

***

DANCESPORT TRIVIA. After the first beginnings of modern ballroom dancing in England in 1812 with the appearance of the waltz, the next advance was made in the 1840s when several new dances made their debut in the ballroom. They included the polka and Mazurka. In 1891, a dance explosion occurred with the introduction of the Two-Step in the United States. Early in the 1900s, a new way of dancing to waltz music, known as the Boston, and the coming of Rag revived the stagnating art of dancing.

Friendship Run

A 10K run organized by the 9th Infantry (Rainbow) Division, Ready Reserve, PA is set at the Bonifacio Global City on Nov. 17. Billed as the 2002 Rainbow Friendship Run, the event aims to foster camaraderie among the civilian and military sectors. It also aims to support the government campaign for a clean and green environment.

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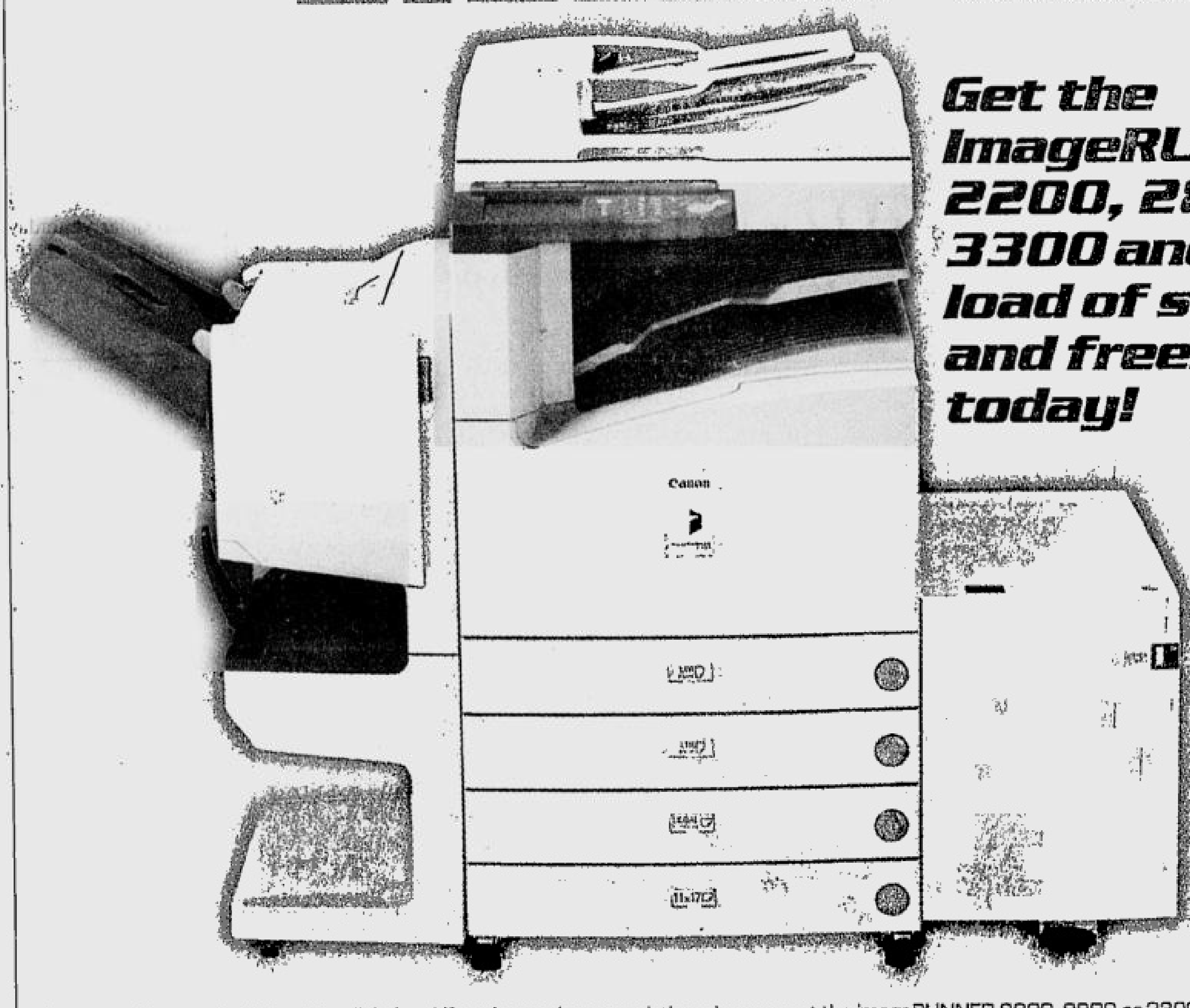

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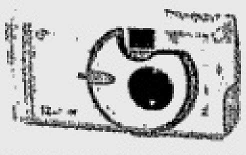

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FIRST GENTLEMAN'S CIRCUIT

Pactolerin, Cruz co-leaders; Gibson quits

By Jong Arcano

CANLUBANG—On a day when the foreign top gun made a last-minute cancellation and the ex-amateur star didn't play up to par in his pro debut, Robert Pactolerin and Dan Cruz sizzled with similar four-under-par 68s yesterday to emerge joint leaders in the First Gentleman's Professional Golf Circuit third leg here.

Pactolerin, 39, used his awesome length off the tee for a 4-under-par 68 in a tie with Cruz, who put his knockdown shots to work in battling the winds and a steady drizzle at the Canlubang Golf and Country Club to share.

They held a one-stroke lead in the P500,000 event presented by San Miguel Beer with the support of WG&A Super Ferry.

The leaderboard was a merry mix of old hands, journeymen and young guns as Carito Villaroman and Danny delos Santos stayed just a stroke behind with their 69s, Anthony Balan and Richard Sinfuego two off at 70 and the trio of newly turned pro Marlon Dizon, Benjie Magada and Rodolfo Ardimer at 71.

The field didn't have to worry about Canadian resident Rick Gibson bringing his steady game in the big leagues into the revived local tour.

Gibson quit to spend more time with his family while he prepares for a long four-week grind in Asia and Japan. That left Pactolerin and Manubay playing in a twosome.

Que's miseries with the Canlubang greens stymied his hopes of a high-impact first day and the national team standout was instead given a different mission—make the cut. His 75 put him in a tie for 30th with only the Top 25 gaining access to the money rounds.

Scores:

68 Robert Pactolerin (35-33), Cruz (35-33)
69 Villaroman (35-34), Delos Santos (36-33)
70 Balan (35-35), Sinfuego (35-35)
Magada (37-34), Ardimer (37-34) Dizon (34-37)
72 Zarate (35-37), Casas (35-37), Ababa (36-36)
Lascuna (35-37), Santia (37-35)
Bagtas (38-34), Pucay (35-37)
Eso (37-35), Sasutil (38-34)
Siodina (34-38)
73 Lascuna (38-35), Salvador (37-36)
Sanchez (37-36), Cruz (36-37)
74 Castro (37-37), Cuello (35-39)
Walker (38-36), Cedo (37-37)

Valley is Uratex venue

THE VALLEY Executive Course in Antipolo, Rizal, has been the chosen site of the Uratex National Caddies Championship next month.

Robert Cheng, the tournament's founder in 1988, bared this yesterday quoting organizing committee co-chair Abe Villanueva of Valley's availability.

Villanueva told Cheng that the Valley board, headed by Alexander "Bobot" Marquez, had unanimously approved Uratex's request.

The Valley board is composed of Mike Liamson, Mekoy Quiogue, Nonoy Carpio, Joe Feliciano, Ben Reyes, Boomba Consunji, Joe Roxas and Orly Tomacruz.

Cheng is resuming the championship in coordination with the First Gentleman's Foundation Inc. headed by Mike Arroyo. The 14th staging of the event is set from Dec. 17-20.

The Capitol Hills was the original home of the event. The 13th edition was played there in 2000. But Cheng had to look for another venue because the course is under renovation.

The deadline of registration is at 5 p.m. Dec. 14. Clubs may sign up at the NGAP offices, tels. 525-6987 and 524-5160 and fax 521-1587 thru Hazel and Charlyn.

P1M FOR U-BIX RIVIERA GOLF

Bert Bravo (second from right) poses with NGAP vice president, Vice Admiral Luisito Fernandez (second from left) and the rest of the working staff of the U-Bix Riviera National Pro Am during turnover ceremonies for the P1-million check at the Caffe Appassionato. The event is set next week at the Riviera's Couples. Front row (from left) are Comm. Danny Pizarro and Taby Tabaniag. Standing (from left) are Lewis Rissman, Jake Ayson, Ed Malinao, Lee Altavas and Jazmine Juanico.

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PBA board to pick...

From page A24

security as far as cash inflow is concerned.

"The Velez group has offered a smaller amount than the NBN-IBC joint venture but it has guaranteed a more secured payment scheme," added the source who failed to elaborate the inner workings of the proposals.

An INQUIRER source also said that Viva-Vintage, which owns the right to air the PBA games up to the end of the 2002 season, has an unpaid arrears of almost P200 million and is reportedly out of the running in the bidding race.

He said that after Viva-Vintage failed on its monetary commitment, the PBA board focuses on taking in a coverer capable of more than satisfying the financial side of airing the games.

"I'm not saying that Viva is already out. Kaya lang medyo nasunog ang PBA board sa Viva," the source added.

Other aspirants which bowed out of contention after initial exploratory talks are Silverstar Television, ABC-5, RPN-9 and television giant ABS-CBN.

Red Bull seeks 3rd win

GAMES TODAY *(Cuneta Astrodome)*
5:30 p.m.—Shell vs Talk N Text
7:30 p.m.—Sta. Lucia vs Red Bull

AFTER barely surviving their opponents twice, Commissioner's Cup titleholder Batang Red Bull Thunder are hoping for a convincing win this time as they face Sta. Lucia Realty today in the Selecta-PBA All Filipino Cup at the Cuneta Astrodome.

The Thunder own a front-running record of 2-0 but coach Yeng Guiao remains unsatisfied with his boys' performance. The Thunder slipped past Coca-Cola, 76-70, before posting a 59-57 squeaker over the Alaska Aces last week.

"If we play the same way we did on our last two games, we will have a tough time this conference," said Guiao.

MARATHON ROW

Asian official enters 'fray'

By Marc Anthony Reyes

OLYMPIC Council of Asian secretary general Dato' Sieh Kok Chi offered yesterday to help convince Vietnam Southeast Asian Games organizers to include marathon in the calendar for next year's edition.

Chi called up Philippine Amateur Track and Field Association president Go Teng Kok to assure him of his support along with the Asian Amateur Athletics Association through secretary general Maurice Nicholas.

Go said that Chi even offered to help the organizers stage marathon events with "less costs."

Instead of staging the men's and women's events separately, Vietnam officials can hold it five minutes apart, Go quoted Chi as saying.

"I have been calling up my counterparts in seven countries and they all agreed to support us," said Go. "Seven of 10 countries which organize marathon events have agreed to lend support."

Philippine Olympic Committee president Celso Dayrit told the INQUIRER yesterday he learned that only seven competed in the 2001 Kuala Lumpur Games in the men's event from five countries, while four competed in the women's side from three countries.

The country won the gold medals in both men's and women's through Christabel Martes and Roy Vence.

Pacquiao fights January

WORLD junior featherweight champion Manny Pacquiao is sure to fight in January, his manager, Rod Nazario, said yesterday.

Pacquiao's possible opponents are undefeated American Tim Austin and Latino fighters Marco Antonio Barrera, Johnny Tapia, Erik Morales and Paulie Ayala.

The bout will probably be held in the United States.

Pacquiao knocked out Thai Fahprakorb Rakkiatgym in the first round to retain his crown on Oct. 26 in Davao City.

Marc Anthony Reyes

Gift for Torre: 3-1 victory over Iraq in Chess Olympiad

BLED, Slovenia—The Philippines crushed Iraq, 3-1, Monday as a gift to Grandmaster Eugene Torre, who turned 51 here at the 35th World Chess Olympiad.

The Filipinos showed no mercy against the Iraqis, whose two key players were stopped by grandmaster Bong Villamayor and IM Nelson Mariano II.

Villamayor defeated Ali Gattea, a Fide master, in 39 moves of a French Defense and Joey Antonio, handling board one, drew with Jwad Ahmad Aziz in 21 moves of a Sicilian.

This victory catapulted the Philippines, which now has 20.5 points, to a share of 29th to 35th places just as the battle for the top spot heated up.

The Filipinos will face Colombia in Tuesday's 10th round.

Goalkeeping course set

THE PHILIPPINE Football Federation will conduct the first ever goalkeeping course in the country on Nov. 7-13 at the Philsports Complex in Pasig City in cooperation with the Japan Football Association (JFA).

Yoshio Kato, current national goalkeeping coach of the JFA Youth Development Program, will serve as course instructor.

A former first string goalkeeper of the Japanese national team for several years, Kato played in Manila against the Philippine squad in an exhibition match in 1981.

From 1994 to 1999, Kato was goalkeeper coach of the JEF United Football Club, one of Japan's top teams in the professional J-League. Two years ago, he served as goalkeeper coach of the "A" team of JEF United.

The goalkeeping course will consist of two parts: a five-day session aimed at developing goalkeeping and one-day training session for youth and senior goalkeepers.

Participants in the course sponsored by Linden Suites, Water Care Philippines and Sahara shirts will come from provincial football associations as far as Baguio City in the north and Zamboanga City in the south.

NBN and IBC have the technology—Concio

THE NATIONAL Broadcasting Network and IBC-13 hope to bring Asia's first professional basketball league to new heights should the PBA Board of Governors approve its proposed simultaneous telecast of PBA Games starting next year.

NBN President and Chair Mia Concio underscored the merits of the NBN-IBC proposal for the coverage of the PBA Games in 2003. "I do believe NBN and IBC have the technology, the expertise, the talent and manpower, and most especially the concept for the coverage of PBA Games that is attuned to the times," she said.

With 33 provincial TV stations reaching 94 percent of the country and the extensive technical facilities, the offer guarantees getting to the heart of Filipino homes with the widest possible reach for telecast.

"In the past, bidders just offer their networks and the airtime for the games, but NBN's creative programming concept behind the coverage has much more to offer than that," said Concio.

Looking back, she said, the government network, then known as GTV, had been instrumental to the initial success of the PBA since 1976. The PBA went on to enjoy its popularity during the '80s when the network changed its name to Maharlika Broadcasting System. The PBA maintained its popularity through 1995 when the network adopted yet another name, People's Television or PTV-4.

"We want to relive those days that gave PBA its distinct stature as a primetime spectacle for 19 years–rom the Marcos era to the Ramos administration," said Concio. "The PBA was a consistent blockbuster with the TV ratings and the gate receipts to prove it, even when the telecast was moved to IBC-13 for another seven years. That's an equivalent of 26 best years with the two government stations."

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Knicks booed by their own fans

NEW YORK—Sam Cassell had 22 points and Michael Redd added 19 as the Milwaukee Bucks defeated the winless New York Knicks, 97-88, Monday.

The Knicks played in front of the first non-sellout crowd in Madison Square Garden for nearly 10 years as 18,100 fans, more than 1,600 short of capacity, booed the team off the court after its fourth successive loss.

The last time there was no sell-out at Madison Square Garden for a basketball game was February 2, 1993, ending a streak of 433 consecutive sell-outs.

Ray Allen added 17 points for the Bucks, who won their first game of the season at the third attempt.

Allan Houston had 28 points for the Knicks, who are 0-4 for the first time since 1987-88 when they lost their first five games of the season. Kurt Thomas added 14 points and 16 rebounds for New York.

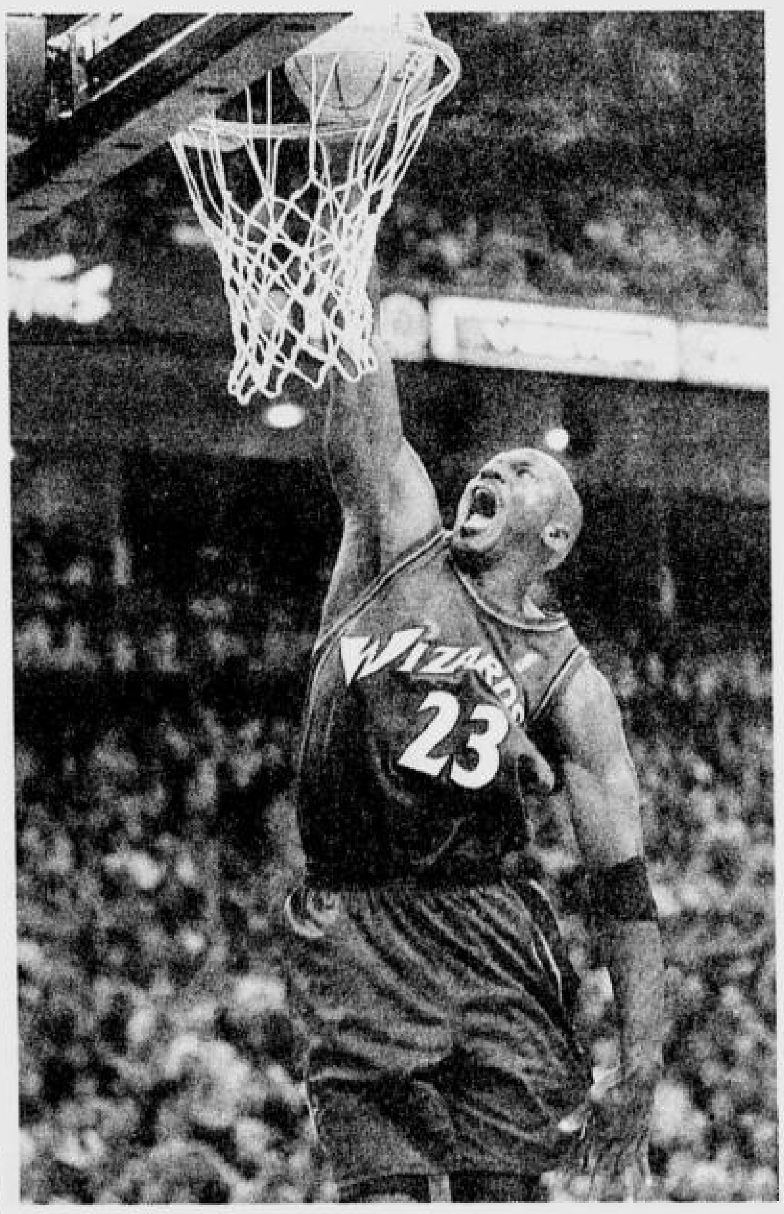
The Knicks rallied from a 16-point deficit to tie the score at 80-80 in the fourth quarter but Milwaukee went on a 7-0 run and were never headed from there.

Raptors 109 Bulls 105 (OT) In Toronto, Lindsay Hunter's jumper with 1.2 seconds left gave the shorthanded Raptors a 109-105 win over the Chicago Bulls.

COMPLETE RESULTS

Milwaukee 97, New York 88; New Jersey 106, Minnesota 82; Toronto 109, Chicago 105 (OT); San Antonio 103, Memphis 101 (OT); Dallas 107, Golden State 100; Detroit 84, Phoenix 82.

AFP



JORDAN: Ageless wonder.

Hungarian leads 'Union' qualifiers

HUNGARIAN Zsusanna Babos outclassed Briton Tiger Rock Angel, 6-0, 6-1, yesterday to lead the qualifiers into the main draw of the US$10,000 Union Cement-ITF Philippines Women's Circuit 1 at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center.

Other winners were Indon Diana Julianto, Thai Orawan Lamangthong, Japanese Mari Inoue and Ryojo Watanabe and Koreans Sung Eun-hee and Seo Soon mi.

Juliante eliminated Filipino Bernardine Sepulveda, 6-0, 6-3, Lamangthong defeated Japanese Kumiko Anzai, 6-1, 6-2, Inoue downed Austrian Patricia Mayr, 6-1, 6-2, Watanabe blanked Filipino Samala, 6-0, 6-0, Sung demolished Filipino Alyssa Anne Labay, 6-2, 6-1, and Seo rallied past Indon Evelina Rusdianto, 3-6, 6-2, 6-4.

The winner between Koreans Bae Haeyoum and Kim Hae-sung, whose rain-delayed match was ongoing as of press time, will complete the 32-person main draw that also include Filipinos Czarina Mae Arevalo and Patricia Santos.

Arevalo, the country's No. 1 player who is ranked No. 1145 in the world, and Santos, who just returned from a successful Asian Championships campaign in Uzbekistan, have been given wild cards along with 15-year-old Uzbek Ivana Isarailova, the Asian Tennis Federation (ATF) wild card.

The singles champion of this event supported by the ITF Grand Slam Development Fund, Wilson balls, Truflex, Manila Midtown Hotel and Philippine Sports Commission will earn US$1,000 in cash and five WTA points.

NBA fans treated to Jordan Time today

IT'S JORDAN time on the Solar Sports Network today.

NBA legend Michael Jordan and the Washington Wizards make their inaugural appearance on the newly launched Solar Sports Network, the first Filipino-operated sports channel on television, with a live game at 9 a.m. today (Wednesday, Nov. 6) against the Minnesota Timberwolves (replays at 7 p.m. and 2 a.m.).

The Solar Sports Network, which was launched last week and runs 24 hours a day, is seen exclusively on Channel 29 on Skycable and Homecable in Metro Manila aside from over 200 provincial cable operators.

Coming off the bench for the first time in his storied career, the 39-year-old Jordan has made a tremendous impact in the last two Wizards games.

He made 15 points in the second quarter to propel the Wizards to an insurmountable 58-40 lead over the Boston Celtics last Friday, en route to 21 points in 21 minutes.

The play of the game was when Jordan stole the ball from Paul Pierce, sent him flying with a fake, before hitting a three-point shot just as the first-half horn sounded and the crowd roared.

Jordan also had 20 points against New Jersey on Sunday, including 14 in the fourth quarter.

Newly acquired Jerry Stackhouse leads the Wizards in scoring (21.3/game) and assists (6.0/game).

Jordan has per-game averages of 16.7 points and 2.7 assists, both second on the team.

SPORTSTV

Compiled by L. Manguiat

POOL: 1997 St Andrews Cup - Billy Snaddon vs Ross McInnes Finals, 5 p.m. (r), ESPN

World Pool Masters 2002, 2 p.m. (r), ESPN

BILLIARDS: Asian 8-Ball Championships 2002, 12:30 p.m. (r), Star Sports

GOLF: LPGA Tournament of Champions, 9 a.m. (r), ESPN

This is the PGA Tour, 11 a.m., Star Sports

Beach volleyball: RP up against tough foes

By Dennis U. Eroa

CLARK, Pampanga—The Philippines faces a stern test as it collides with highly rated foes today at the start of the Clark Centennial Cup Asian Women's beach volleyball championship at the scenic Clearwater Country Club here.

The tandem of Jennifer Bohawe and Sarah Faye Luna, ranked first in the country, tackles Indonesia I in the morning game, before battling the tough Thailand 1 combination of Manat Pangka and Rattanaporn Ariaisuk in the afternoon.

Opening ceremonies of this world-class event will be held at 3 p.m. AYN Sports Management Group organized the event which is supported by PAL, Gatorade, Globe, Absolute, the Philippine Sports Commission and the Philippine Star.

The Thais are currently ranked 18th in the world and boast of winning the 1998 gold medal in the Bangkok Asian Games.

Thailand 2, fourth placer in the just-concluded Busan Asiad, meet the second Philippine team of Cecille Tabuena and Helen Dosdos. Tabuena and Dosdos must actually hurdle the Japanese pair of Satoko Urata and Sanae Tsubakimoto in the morning schedule in order to bolster their chances of entering the Final Four.

Tournament format calls for the top two teams in each group advancing to the crossover Final Four. The winners will advance to the finals and dispute the $3,000 purse.

BLAST FROM THE PAST

TODAY in 1990, Rikki DyLiacco set winning times of 48.47 and 51.69 seconds to rule the eighth leg of the RACE Motorsports Club slalom at the Folk Arts Theater parking lot. Also today in 1998, University of Mindanao beat Ateneo de Davao, 5-1, to top the Coke Go-for-Goal football championship at the Agro Industrial Foundation held in Davao City.

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Vis-Min
3 8 10 22 37 41

PBA board to pick coverage partner

By June Navarro

VELEZ

FINANCIAL sustainability more than anything else.

This will be the driving point of the PBA Board of Governors today when it finally appoints the television consortium of its choice for the coverage of the games in the next three years.

The choices of the board now boils down to a group led by Bobong Velez and a joint venture between television networks NBN-4 and IBC-13.

Both aspirants have wrapped up their presentations as early as two weeks ago and are awaiting the nod of the board to seize the broadcasting rights of Asia's first play-for-pay league.

"The board will award the broadcasting rights to the group which has the strongest financial backbone," a PBA insider told the Inquirer.

The NBN-IBC combine of Mia Concio and Ed Finlan has dangled almost P700 million spread over three years while the consortium formed by Velez, Republic Flour Mills top honcho Joey Concepcion, Bobby Barreiro and Choy Cojuangco is willing to throw away nearly P600 million in television money.

Their proposals also contain some sweeteners where the league could earn more than what will be stipulated in the contract.

"If the projection for the year overshoots by let's say P100 million, the PBA will get 30 percent from that amount minus the marketing and agency fees," said the source, who requested anonymity.

The source said that judging from the amount the bidders had floated, the NBN-IBC combine has the upperhand but the Velez consortium presents more

PBA/ A23

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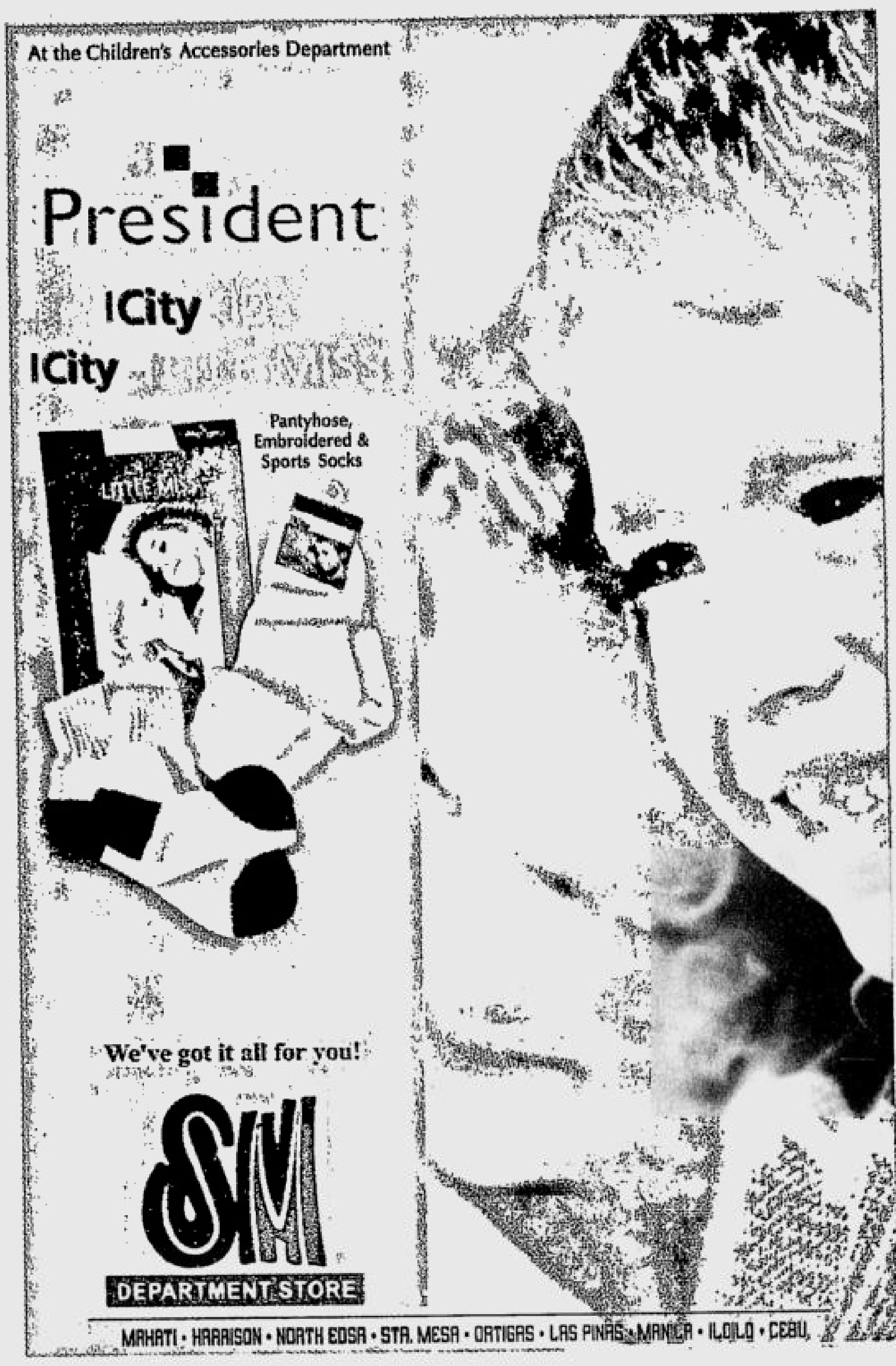
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Crackdown on foreigners

THE OTHER SIDE OF SUN VALLEY
A boy plays in a quiet part of Barangay Sun Valley in Parañaque, unaware that policemen are raiding a house in the community that turns out to be a big shabu laboratory.

ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

By Christian V. Esguerra

LOCAL authorities in Parañaque will launch a crackdown on foreigners, especially Chinese, who are renting houses in the city following the All Saints' Day raid on a shabu laboratory in Barangay Sun Valley.

Roberto Guevara, barangay chair of Sun Valley, yesterday said all foreign renters would be subjected to a census to determine their background, particularly their sources of income.

If the income would seem disproportionate to the renter's lifestyle, barangay officials would seek further investigation by the police, Guevara said.

"We don't want to have another drug laboratory in our barangay," Guevara told the INQUIRER, referring to the one discovered inside a mansion on Hemlock Street at the Executive Heights Village in the same barangay.

The Peace and Order Council of Sun Valley will meet tonight to discuss ways to prevent the operation of another shabu laboratory in the area.

A certain Lee couple managed to secretly operate a sophisticated drug lab that supposedly could manufacture huge amounts of high-grade shabu in a mansion registered in the name of Teddy Monasterio, a former amateur basketball player.

Police raided the house Friday night and seized at least 68 kilos of ephedrine, a few grams of shabu, and drug-making equipment.

CRACKDOWN/ A26

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11th suspect nabbed for lotto winner's slay

By Nelson Flores

POLICE on Monday arrested another suspect in the killing of the lotto winner in Antipolo last week, bringing to 11 the number of people in police custody.

SPO2 Jesus Nueva of the Antipolo City police headquarters identified the suspect as Nayorico Guatno, 50, said to be a neighbor of the slain Arturo Eupeña, 58, sole winner of the Oct. 12 lotto draw.

Nueva said Guatno was arrested while he was resting in his house shortly before 11 p.m. Monday.

Nueva said witnesses pointed to Guatno as the man who stopped the other neighbors from bringing Eupeña to the hospital after the victim was shot.

Nueva said Guatno blocked the neighbors and prevented them from carrying the mortally wounded victim to the hospital.

Supt. Jose Dayco, Antipolo City police chief, earlier tagged Guatno as a suspect, notwithstanding reports that it was Guatno who reported the incident to police.

Dayco added that two other suspects, identified only as Andy and Bert, are still being sought.

Government lawyers have recommended no bail against the 10 suspects who were arrested last week.

Francisco Areque, 26, Rolando Velasco, 36, Renato Rasonado, 23, Samuel Guiba, 40, Luisito Caindoy, 20, Aurelio Omega, 51, Eric Peñalosa, 24, Noel Pinoso Olmoroto, 30, Lito Abarico, 43, and Joselito Rose,

11TH/ A26

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'Singsing' misleading, says CBCP

By Armand N. Nocum

AFTER its recent defense of ghosts, the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP), this time through its movie review body, is protesting the portrayal of cats as mediums for evil spirits.

In its latest review, the Catholic Initiative for Enlightened Movie Appreciation (Cinema) took potshots at the local movie "Singsing ni Lola (Grandma's Ring)" for being misleading, if not altogether frightening, for kids.

"After watching (this movie) children will be afraid of the dark, cemeteries, and black cats," Cinema said in Filipino.

The two-year-old review body is under CBCP's Office on Women, headed by Dr. Zenaida Rodea.

Directed by Uro Q. de la Cruz, the movie tells of a cursed family whose members die of mysterious causes upon reaching the age of 18. Only the ring of the family's grand matriarch, handed down through generations, is able to neutralize the curse.

Cinema questioned the decision of the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board to give the film, which is currently showing in lo-

SINGSING/ A26

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PIC YESNO
PIC PATCHUP

Higit Pa Sa Isang Kaibigan	*Roselle Nava*	**TONE HIGITPA**
Kaibigan Lang Pala	*Lilet*	**TONE KAIBIGAN**
Magkayakap Na Puso	*Vina Morales*	**TONE YAKAPPUSO**
Nananaginip Ng Gising	*Rachel Alejandro*	**TONE NANAGINIP**
Sabi Ko Na Nga Ba	*Sheryl Cruz*	**TONE SABIKONA**
Patutunayan Ko	*Marco Sison*	**TONE PATUNAYAN**
I Cried	*Lilet*	**TONE ICRIED**
Tunay Na Magkaibigan	*14K*	**TONE TNAYKAIBGAN**
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POW! PICK OF THE WEEK

Nov. 11 deadline for tow truck owners

By Leila B. Salaverria

A NOV. 15 deadline has been set for the registration of tow truck operators in their respective local government units so that the Metro Manila Council ordinance prescribing towing guidelines can be effectively implemented.

Towing companies that fail to comply with the deadline would virtually have to stop operations.

"All tow trucks that are unregistered after Nov. 15 would be considered colorum vehicles," said Metro Manila Development Authority Traffic Operations Center Director Angelito Vergel de Dios. "We have sent a memo to all local government units (informing them about this)."

He said MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando had warned tow truck operators they would be charged with car theft if they are caught operating without registration.

Registered tow trucks would be given registration plates and MMDA logos so they could be easily identified, Vergel de Dios added.

He had earlier said that local government units that have been remiss in submitting their list of accredited tow truck operators hinder the effectiveness of the recently passed towing ordinance.

The ordinance provides unified rules and guidelines on the proper towing of vehicles and aims to rein in fly-by-night towing operators who charge astronomical fees.

Under the rules, accredited tow truck operators must first report to the MMDA the plate number, location and offense of the vehicle they will tow.

Owners of the towed vehicles may then call the MMDA's 136 hotline to ask where they can find their vehicle, what violation it has committed and how much fine they have to pay.

But without a complete list of the registered towing companies from the LGUs, the MMDA is encountering difficulty in tracing tow truck operators who are the subject of calls to the MMDA's 136 hotline, the traffic director said.

Vergel de Dios also said that the MMDA would be setting up four apprehending stations along Edsa to catch motorists who try to elude being cited for traffic violations.

"It's for those who run away from traffic enforcers," he said of the apprehending stations.

The stations will be manned by traffic enforcers and will function as checkpoints. They will be located at strategic points so that traffic flow will not be hindered as well, according to Vergel de Dios.

Sto. Niño missing from Nat'l Museum

By Christian V. Esguerra

A PRICELESS artifact has disappeared from the National Museum, and art division curator Nick Legaspi admits the museum is finding it hard to secure its treasures because of lack of funds.

The missing artifact is an image of the Sto. Niño Dormido (Sleeping Sto. Niño), which Legaspi said disappeared from the main showcase gallery of the museum in Manila two months ago.

Speaking with reporters after the Bulung Pulungan forum at the Westin Philippine Plaza, Legaspi downplayed the loss of the image.

"We can't really say at this point if the Sto. Niño had been stolen," he said. "Sometimes people take religious artifacts to use them to heal the sick."

He refused to elaborate on the circumstances surrounding the Sto. Nino's disappearance.

Ben Matias, National Museum researcher, described the statue as a rare and extremely expensive artifact worth millions of pesos today.

It was donated by Jaime Laya, former chair of National Commission for Culture and the Arts, to the National Museum after the Central Bank of the Philippines reacquired it at an auction in the 1980s. Laya was Central Bank governor at that time.

The image became part of the Central Bank collection and was later bequeathed by Laya to the National Museum.

Filipino artisans had carved the image from solid ivory from Macau. It lies on a four-poster bed of silver with a gold banner that an angel is holding.

The image was one of the treasures the British had taken in 1764 after two years of occupation.

During the Westin forum, Marinduque Rep. Edmund Reyes Jr. said the museum receives a yearly budget of about P1 million only.

A popular painting by Fernando Amorsolo, "The Offering," had also been stolen from the museum several years ago, according to Matias.

Mr. Go's new winning formula

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

FIND someone who would do anything to win medals for the country and you have Go Teng Kok.

He'd clamor and claw, plead and fight, just to have a shot at those medals.

He did hit the jackpot in the Kuala Lumpur Southeast Asian Games last year.

But returning empty-handed from the Busan Asiad, our intrepid medal hunter again got shamed in the Asian Junior Athletics Championship in Bangkok.

So where did the back-to-back debacles bring Mr. Go?

Last heard of, he was threatening to put up a one-man secessionist movement for the sake of winning the marathon golds in next year's SEA Games in Vietnam.

***

Well, for the record, the hosts had made it clear they could not stage the marathon, whose men and women's golds were won by the Philippines in KL, in the 2003 edition of the SEA Games.

Vietnam said it has no terrain, not enough logistics, and no organizational know-how to ensure the success of the marathon events.

For the record, Philippine Olympic committee president Celso Dayrit swore he had appealed for the inclusion of marathon in the Vietnam Games calendar.

It was reported that Dayrit even had some sour exchanges on the floor but the hosts, insisting there are 40 other gold medals available in athletics, refused to budge.

***

Go, however, refused to believe. He refused to give up. Claiming Dayrit had discriminated against him, Go threatened to secede from the POC.

If he has to resign as head of the Patafa (Philippine Amateur Track and Field Association) for them to formalize the marathon appeal, Go said he would quit his post.

Go in the same breath claimed he has many connections.

Well, obviously convinced he had exhausted his resources, Dayrit next suggested that Go turn to his friends in the Asian track and field federation, who could next talk to the hosts.

***

It's hard to say now what Go would do next.

If he had to resort to blackmail, chances are he would do it just to have his say.

It has become clear Go is aching to save face and make up for his twin shames in Busan and Bangkok this year.

Unfortunately, it has also become clear Go would all too willingly trample on the spirit of sportsmanship for the sake of winning medals.

So forget the spirit of Busan where, as Mr. Danding Cojuangco had swooned, unity and reconciliation blossomed for the sake of the country's campaign in the recently concluded 14th Asian Games.

***

Go Teng Kok has obviously found a new winning formula.

Forget how Danding and Gretchen Cojuangco thanked all those who had made the successful equestrian team campaign possible with an unforgettable, shining night in their Balete Drive headquarters.

Forget about the magic Mikee Cojuangco and her cousins Danielle, Michelle, Paola, together with Toni Leviste, wove in Busan.

Go Teng Kok has found a new formula.

He'll go all out to the point of forming a One-Man Separatist Movement.

Pray that this rebel fails.

HANDS AND TONGUE TIED
Manila police arrested Ronaldo Fernandez (above) in Paco, Manila on suspicion that he raped a 33-year-old woman. The National Capital Region Police Office also arrested Israel Lacson, who is accused of raping an 8-year-old girl who sells sampaguita. Police said Lacson stuck his tongue out to show he was not using illegal drugs.

JESS YUSON, JOAN BONDOC

11th suspect nabbed for lotto winner's slay

From page A25

39, were charged with robbery with homicide, car theft, illegal possession of firearms and other deadly weapons before the Antipolo City Regional Trial Court.

Police earlier assured the victim's relatives that they have enough evidence to put away the suspects.

Antipolo investigator SPO1 Felipe Matias said police spent much time tracing the suspects to their hideouts in a number of depressed sitios in Barangay San Jose, Antipolo City.

Matias said the first to be arrested was Guiba. Eupeña's new Toyota Hi-Ace van worth P1.3 million was found in Guiba's possession.

Matias said that while being interrogated, Guiba named and led policemen to the hiding places of the other gang members.

At the police station, Arique and Velasco pointed to each other as the mastermind. They also identified Rasonada as the man who shot and killed Eupeña, Matias said.

Dayco earlier clarified that it was the victim's wife who won the P19-million jackpot prize.

The victim was killed on Oct. 28 inside his house in Nazarene Ville, Barangay San Roque, Antipolo City, after a drinking session.

At least five armed men barged into the house of the victim and shot him at close range when he allegedly tried to resist.

The robbers then took with them the newly bought Toyota Hi-Ace van of the family.

Dayco also revealed that the victim's son Reynan, 31, identified Velasco and Areque as among the guests at Eupeña's birthday party on Oct. 25. The party was held at the back of the house of Eupeña, which was being renovated.

Atienza goes after cell phone thieves

By Jerome Aning

THE ALERT against terrorists in Manila has taken its toll on the citizens.

Mayor Lito Atienza yesterday ordered the Western Police District to crack down on petty thieves, particularly cell phone snatchers.

"Robbery complaints, especially against cell phone snatchers, have been mounting these past few weeks," Atienza said during the weekly meeting with heads of city government departments, including WPD director Senior Supt. Pedro Bulaong.

Less than an hour after he issued the directive, members of the Manila Traffic and Peacekeeping Action Team caught suspected cell phone thief Raymond Beltran, 23, on Taft Avenue in front of the Philippine General Hospital.

In Quiapo, Marjun Castro, 19, of Bagong Silang, Caloocan City, was arrested after a brief chase for grabbing the bag of Josephine Wan, 19, on Carriedo Street.

After a brief chase, PO2 Wilfredo Millare of the WPD caught Castro and recovered Wan's bag.

Crackdown on foreigners

From page A25

To prevent drug syndicates from operating drug laboratories, Guevara urged residents to be always conscious of their neighbors.

"Who would have thought that Mr. and Mrs. Lee were operating a drug laboratory?" he asked. "They seemed to live a very normal life and nobody had any suspicion about them at first."

Barangay officials found out about the drug laboratory after neighbors complained of strange fumes coming from the mansion.

Aside from the drug laboratory on Hemlock Street, authorities have also identified two big shabu distribution centers in Sun Valley, in Cherry East and Culdesac, a labyrinth of dirt roads and shanties.

Guevara said there are at least 20 regular village watchers on top of about 200 security volunteers patrolling the 177-hectare Barangay Sun Valley which is home to about 32,000 people.

'Singsing' misleading ...

From page A25

cal theaters, a GP (general patronage) rating.

A film should not get a "GP" simply because it has no nude scenes, Cinema noted. The fact that "Singsing" underscores the power of a black curse is "alarming" enough, it added.

That mothers are shown as protecting their children, even from the afterlife, is a "redeeming" factor, the review group said. It also found the cinematography and actors' performances "commendable."

Overall, Cinema rated "Singsing" as technically "above average," but only "acceptable" in "moral assessment."

PCC High Class '67 reunion

THERE will be a get-together of the members of PCC High School Class '67 at the residence of Ernesto Garcia at 41 Nirvana St., Tugatog, Malabon on Nov. 9 starting at 3 p.m.

For details, call Ernie at 258-1287 or Remy Sta. Ana-Orfanel at 9361692.

METROBRIEFS

Crushed

RODOLFO Dewang, 49, of Tagumpay Village, Bagong Silangan, Quezon City, on Monday morning was thrown off his motorcycle and crushed to death when he was run over by a truck, also in Quezon City. Dewang died from severe injuries in the head and body, police said. He was travelling along Tandang Sora Avenue on board a Honda motorcycle (TT-8772) when he lost control of the vehicle because of the slippery road near the corner of Commonwealth Avenue, police said. Dewang was thrown off his motorcycle and run over by an Isuzu six-wheeler truck (UEX-323) driven by Joselito Mendoza, 28, of the IC Center Builders. Mendoza surrendered to police.

Alcuin Papa

Shot dead

ANTONIO Gulagao, 29, of Temporary Housing, Vitas, Tondo, Manila, died when two unidentified men fired repeatedly at a *sari-sari* store in Tondo, police said. Laborer Rogelio Maglate, 32, of Asuncion Street, also in Tondo, and Gulagao's distant relative, Tessie Aseda, were injured in the shooting. Police said Gulagao and Aseda were tending their store in front of Gulagao's house when the gunmen arrived at about 9 p.m. Monday and fired at Gulagao. Aseda tried to hide but they still shot her, police said. A stray bullet hit Maglate in the head, and he is now in critical condition at the Philippine General Hospital. The suspects escaped.

Philip C. Tubeza

Sidetracked

INSTEAD of depositing P144, 302 of his employers' money in the bank, utility man Reynato Bruno spent the day at the Roligon cockpit in Parañaque. But at the end of the day, only P5,802 remained in his pocket. Bruno, 25, Far East Maritime Foundation utility man and a resident of Makati, is now facing charges of qualified theft, police said. Rodeth Ann Ferraren, a representative of the maritime agency, told police that Bruno had deposited company money in the bank several times in the past. Police arrested Bruno after his employers reported the theft. Only P5,802 was found on him when investigators searched him, police said.

Philip C. Tubeza

Raped

POLICE are looking for Henry Galupas, a maintenance man of the Department of Public Works and Highways Region 4-A office on NIA Road, Edsa, Barangay Pinyahan, Quezon City, for allegedly raping a mentally retarded 14-year old girl. The girl, who is also deaf, filed the complaint against Gupas before the Central Police District Police Station 10 on Kamuning. SPO4 Corazon Sandoval of the CPD Police Station 10 Women's and Children's Desk said Galupas raped the girl last Aug. 7, Sept. 10 and Oct. 30. Police said Galupas was a former suitor of the girl's aunt.

Alcuin Papa

Molested

A DRIVER was arrested in Punta, Sta. Ana, Manila for allegedly molesting a nine-month-old nephew and the boy's two-year-sister. PO2 Miriam Fernandez of the Western Police District Women and Children's Desk said the children's mother woke up in the morning of Oct. 31 and saw the driver molesting her son. The mother said she did not give it much thought until the following day when a female cousin told her she had caught the suspect alone with the two children. The mother immediately checked on her two-year-old daughter who she found had a "minor irritation." She reported the incident to the police. Members of the WPD Mobile unit caught the suspect.

Philip C. Tubeza

Warning from advertisers

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

VIEWERS were gratified last week when some advertisers finally told TV producers to clean up their shows, or suffer the loss of their all-important advertising income. Fact is, that ultimatum has been long in coming. Some years ago, the country's major advertisers signed a covenant to support only shows that promoted quality production standards and positive values—but, when push came to shove, they didn't do much in that direction. Well, some of them have acted now, so they should be congratulated. We trust that other advertisers will follow suit soonest.

This appears to be the only language that many TV people can understand. All this while, viewers have been reminding them of their responsibilities, but the bloody ratings war has rendered them deaf to all entreaties. But money, especially the threatened loss of it, has an uncannily effective way of clearing up all hearing problems in this regard.

We've noticed some recent changes on noontime shows, like dancers with more clothes on, less risque comments, and less exploitative and demeaning "tests" of contestants' fortitude, strength and endurance.

These are steps in the right direction, but they shouldn't be mere palliatives just to placate advertisers.

The real questions should be asked and answered: Are people involved in daytime TV shows aware that many minors are watching during those hours, and it is their right to be protected from excessively mature, exploitative or disturbing material that they're too young to adequately deal with?

No more hemming and hawing, that's the bottom line. If they say yes, they know what to stop doing and showing. If they say no, nothing will really change, and viewers and advertisers may just have to do their best—or worst.

'TVM' at Music Museum

LAST Wednesday, actor-singer-director **Rito Asilo**, the New Voice Company's associate director, returned from a one-month study and theatergoing visit to London, during which he took an advanced acting course and saw many fine productions on the West End.

Upon his return, Rito immediately plunged into rehearsals for the Filipino version of New Voice's hit "The Vagina Monologues," which will be performed again at 3p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 9 at Music Museum.

This time around, the production topbills fine theater performers **Missy Maramara**, **Madeleine Nicolas** and **Christine Escudero**.

Assisting director Rito Asilo are stage manager **Lisa Santos** and assistant director **Rabbi Gannabon**.

On Oct. 23, there will be another performance of the play's Filipino version, but with another cast led by **Gina Alajar**.

It's interesting to see that more show biz performers are getting involved in the local (English and Filipino) productions of **Eve Ensler**'s hit play. In the States, scores of stars have taken turns performing the play, thus raising awareness of the production's anti-violence theme, not just among viewers, but among members of the theater-TV-film community as well.

Since these actresses play roles in other productions and are looked up to as role models by some female viewers, the insights they gain from doing the show can inform their performances in other productions as well.

Inflated box-office figures

FROM the box-office figures being released by producers of new local films these days, we get the impression that the Filipino movie industry has come out of its long slump, and is enjoying much better times than last year. But a movie insider cautions us about being overly optimistic, for the simple reason that some of those opening-day figures could be inflated.

Why would producers puff up their new films opening-day take? Because some of those productions topbill big stars, who would lose face if their latest starrers' disappointing income is revealed.

Also, proclaiming a movie a hit, even if it really isn't, has a positive psychological effect on the film audience, who would be curious to see what about the "hit" film people are so excited about.

So, we are advised not to implicitly believe

WARNING/ A31

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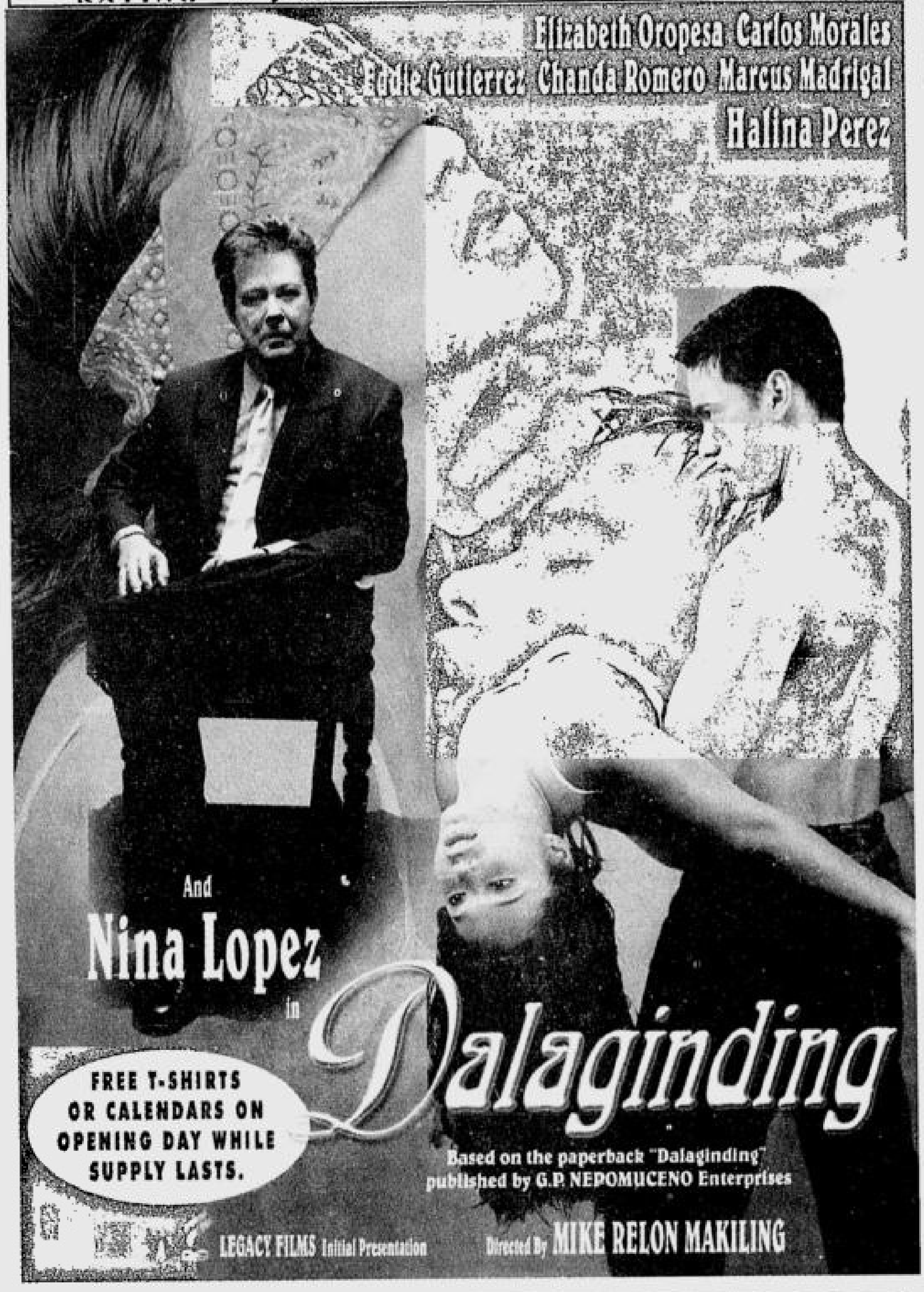

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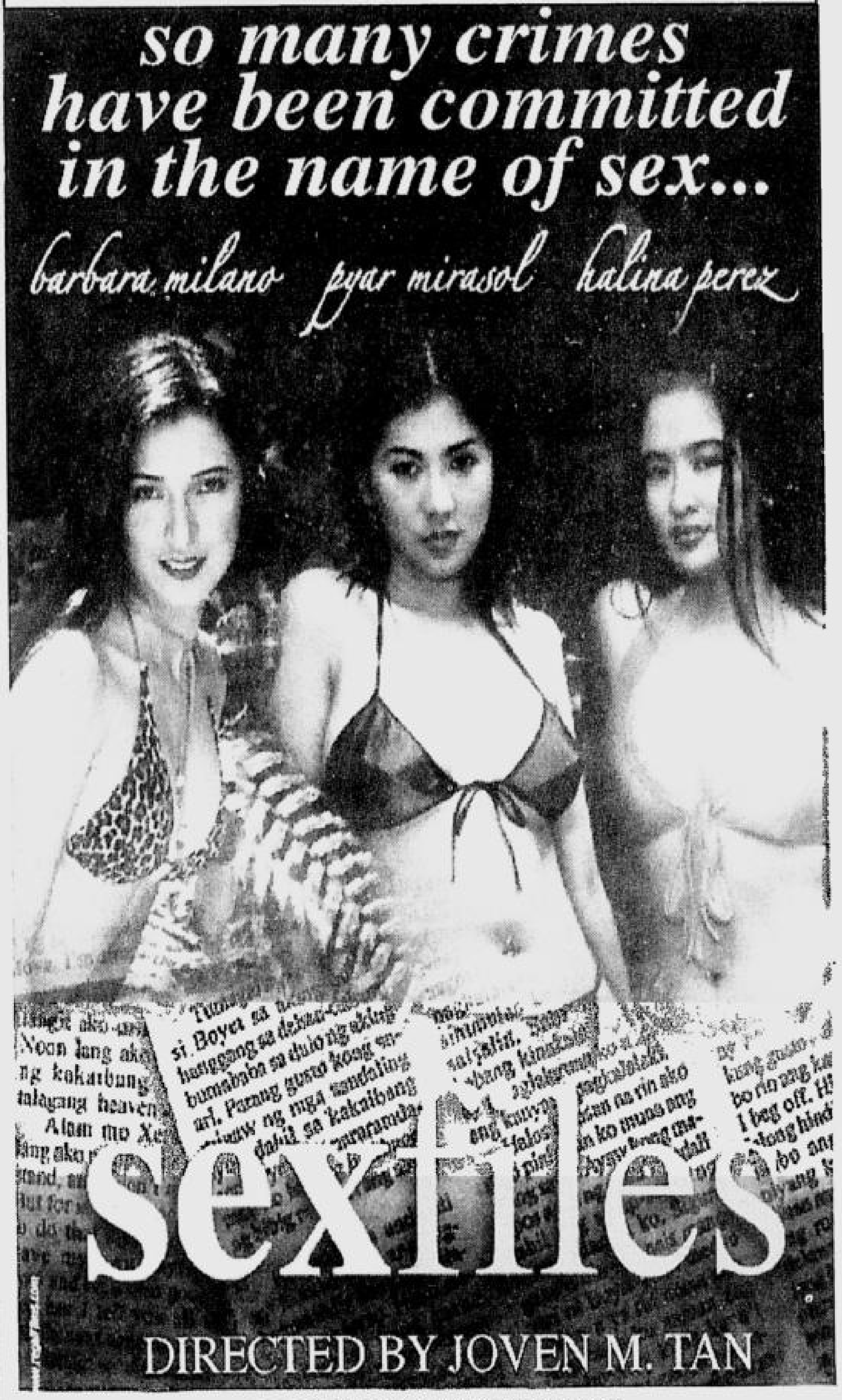

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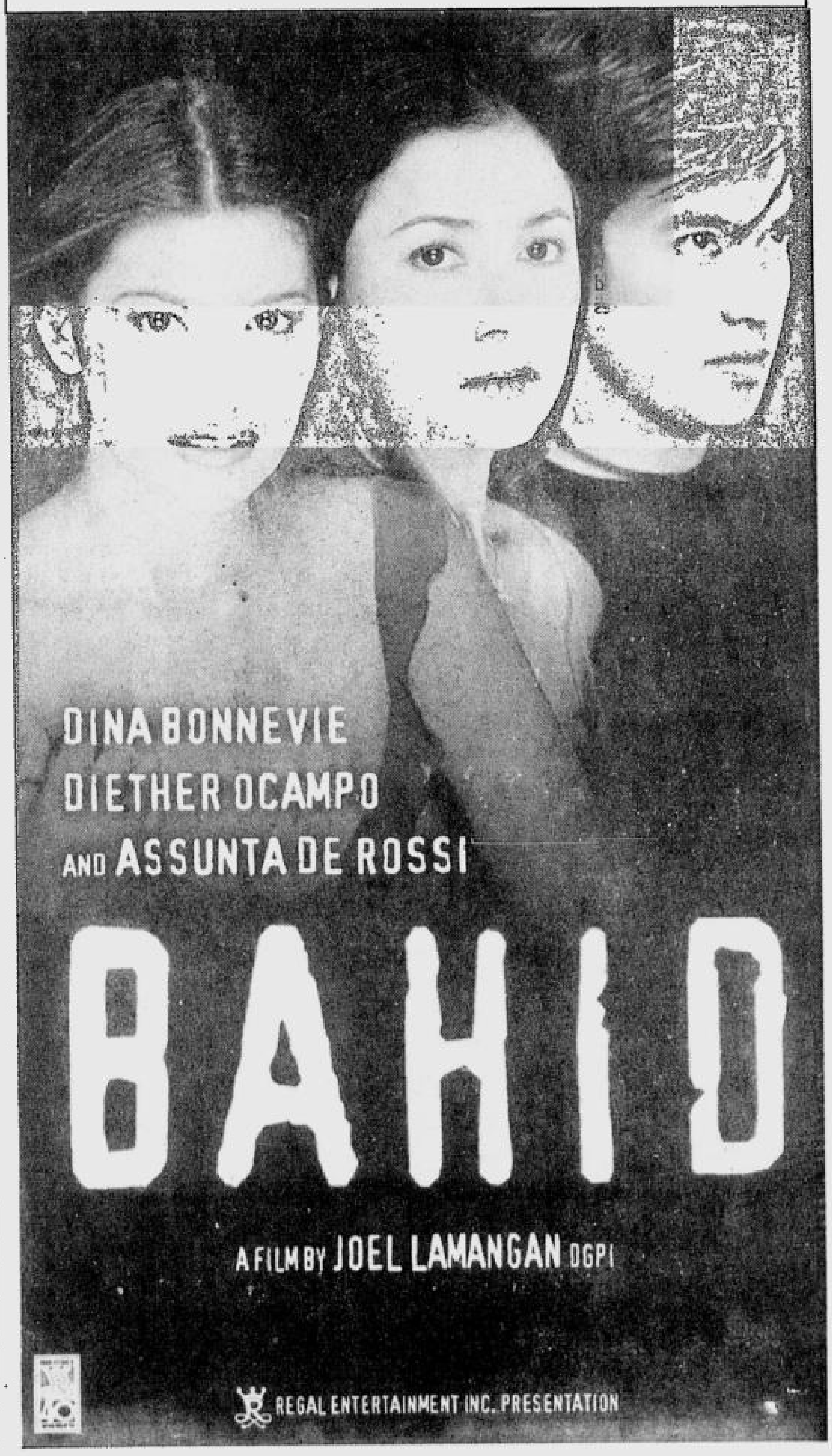

DINA BONNEVIE
DIETHER OCAMPO
AND ASSUNTA DE ROSSI
BAHID
A FILM BY JOEL LAMANGAN DGPI
REGAL ENTERTAINMENT INC. PRESENTATION

Superheroes minus the tights

From page A29

agents that reside in many of the youth-oriented WB's shows, but she makes the rather two-dimensional comics character of Lana Lang vivacious and a little vulnerable. The scene where she admits to talking to her dead parents in the cemetery is heart-tugging. The role offers a bunch of possibilities for Kreuk to truly substantiate Lana like she's never been on the printed page.

Lana Lang trivia for fans of the Superman franchise: Annette O' Toole played the character in "Superman III," and she now plays Clark's adoptive mother Martha in in this show.

"Smallville" follows the precept that the young Kryptonian should have limitations, as the character has yet to reach a power level that's godlike. His discovery of his developing abilities makes for fun moments. The dreaded presence of the power-robbing alien mineral Kryptonite further impedes the full realization of his might, and it's no wonder he goes klutzy around Lana: She's using a tiny fragment as a pendant.

A red variation will be shown in season 2, which affects his personality, making him sound and act more hormone-crazed than the usual teen.

What's also interesting is the current comic book versions of these characters. In the present DC universe, a covertly vile Lex Luthor is now the American president. His vice president, Pete Ross, is married to Lana, and they have a child named after their old friend Clark.

The "Smallville" Pete Ross is an African-American kid (Sam Jones III), and the show's closest representation of the blond white guy from the comic books is Lana's football star boyfriend Whitney Fordman (yes, "Whitney," played by Eric Johnson).

Tested formula

Everybody knows that Clark and Lana won't end up together, but viewers are more than eager to see how things work out or not for the two anyway. As a preview of Clark's chosen future occupation, his investigative nosiness is also slowly being explored.

The show's duplication of the tested formula of "Buffy the Vampire Slayer" regarding weekly antagonists can get old quickly here, though. They can't be all unhinged, mutated Smallvillers. Or can they? It's a good thing there's metahuman activity outside the territory, as another fan-favorite hero, the Flash, makes a swift (a pun!) appearance as an Internet story headlined "Record-breaking teen becomes fastest man alive."

Creative input by "X-Files"-associated talents David Nutter (who directs and is executive producer) and Mark Snow (for music) assures a good, watchable future for this series.

And speaking of the future, if we look forward, it's a distinct possibility that a few years from now, a plucky young journalism student named Lois Lane might make a much-anticipated appearance. She just might be the root of rich boy Lex's evil.

Broken friendships, capes and tights, a haircut and eyeglasses—these might happen in the series ending. But for now, as Clark tries to gain acceptance, he dutifully complains to his loving parents: "All I wanna do is go through high school without being a total loser."

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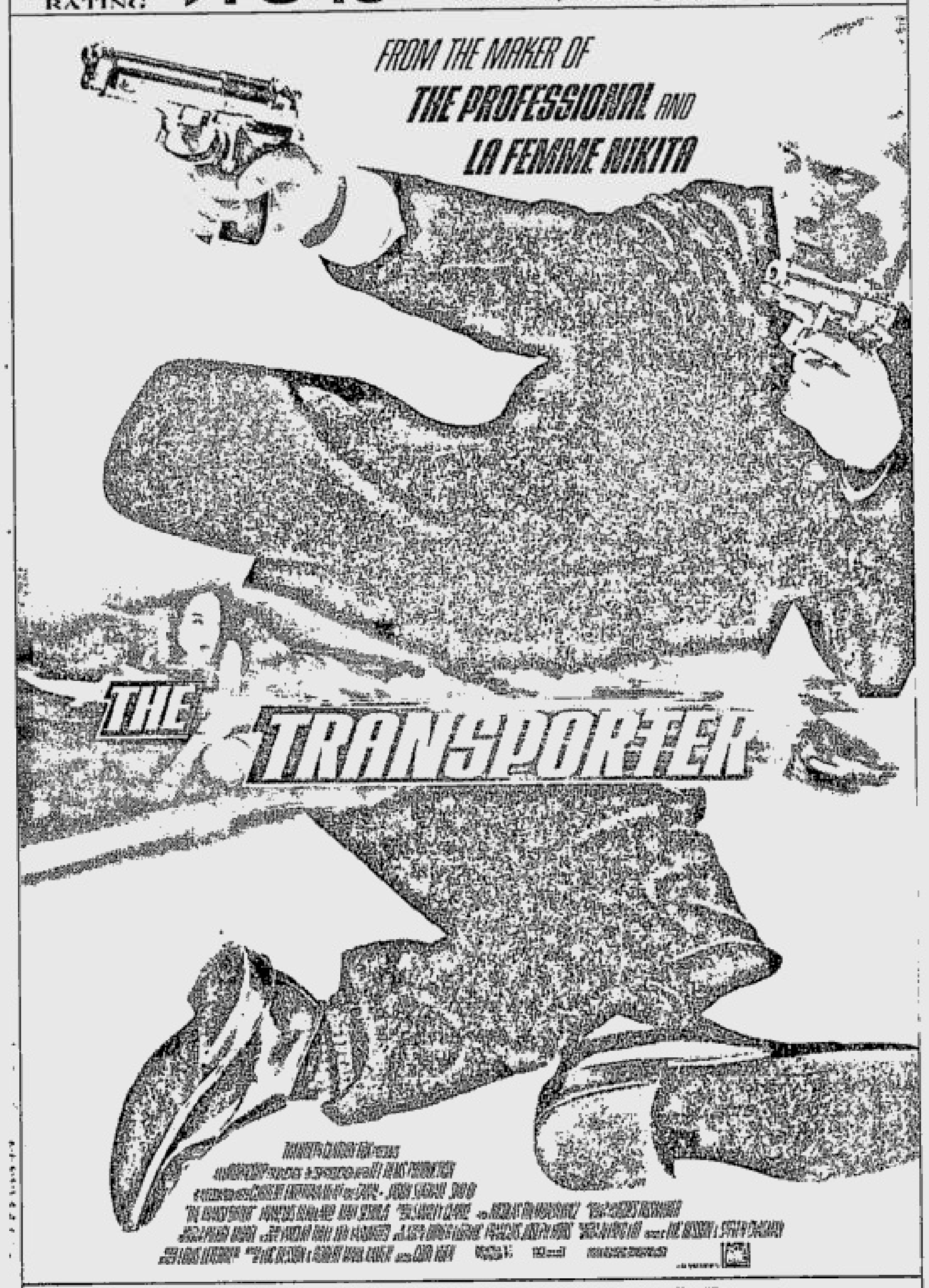
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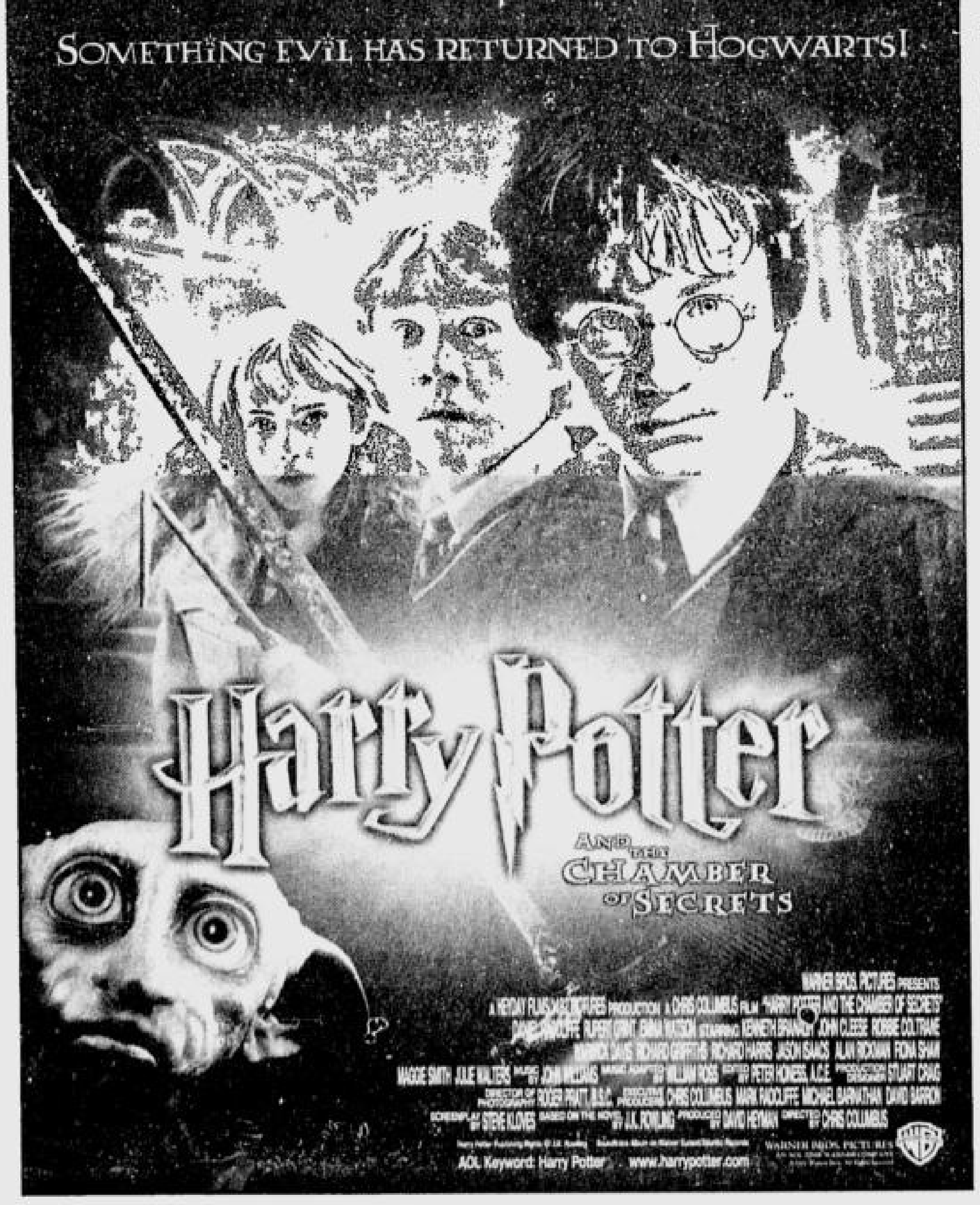
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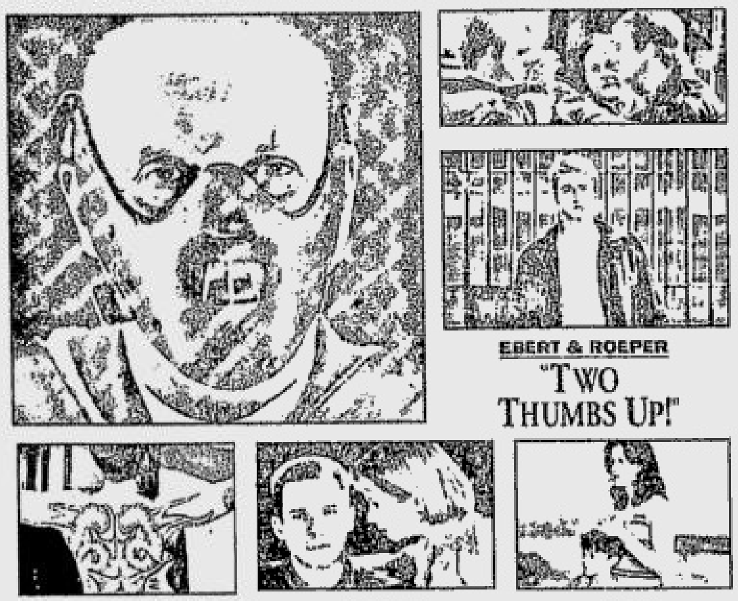
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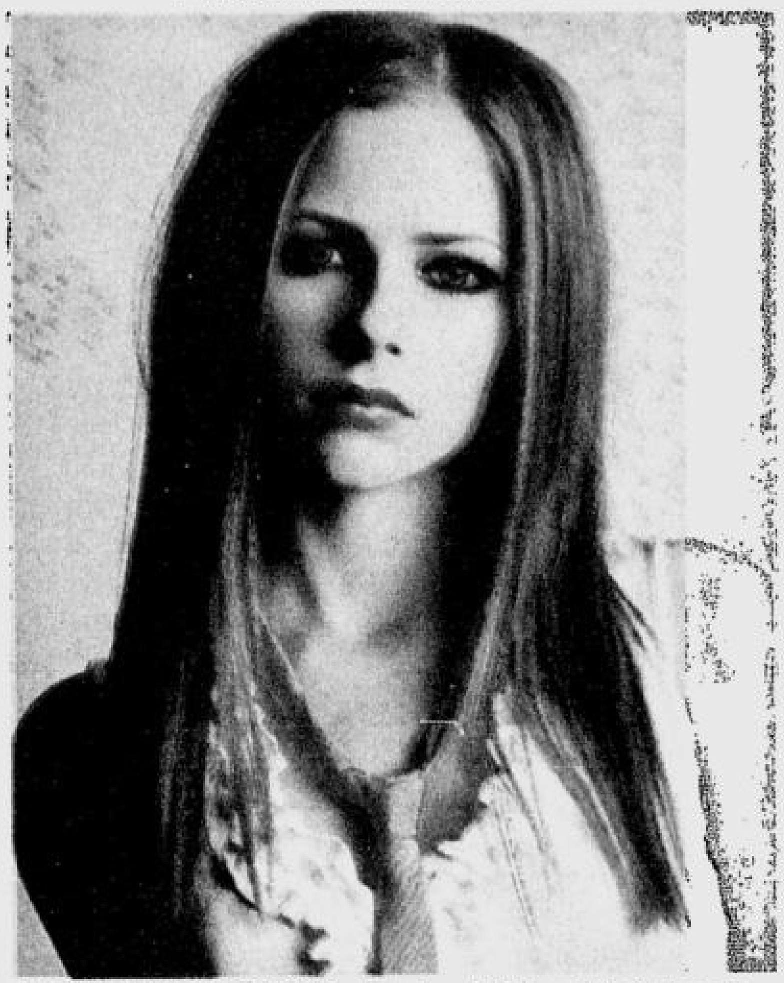


PHENOMENAL SUCCESS. Avril Lavigne finds her niche in the pop music world as a singer-songwriter.

Real-girl Avril vs 'Dirrty' Christina

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Leah Salterio

WHEN I first heard about teenage singer **Avril Lavigne** (pronounced la-veen) from my 10-year-old daughter, I told myself, "Another **Britney Spears** or **Christina Aguilera** wannabe."

But my daughter insists Avril is popular.

I was clueless about Avril's fame until my recent trip to the United States, when I saw her name and posters plastered on record stores from the East Coast to the West Coast. Her debut album, "Let Go," is the latest toast of the pop music charts in the US and has sold over two million copies to date. Her acoustic hit, "Complicated," spans all age brackets, from six to 60. And she recently bagged the best new female artist award in the MTV Video Music Awards 2002.

These enviable credentials have secured Avril a niche in the pop music world.

The 18-year-old Avril is the latest teen princess to climb the pop charts, earlier dominated by the likes of **Michelle Branch**, **Pink** or **Vanessa Carlton**.

The Nov. 1 issue of Entertainment Weekly featured Avril on its cover, accompanied by a lengthy write-up about the Canadian singer.

"While Britney and Christina have almost dared radio to add hookless tunes like 'Boys' and 'Dirrty' to their playlists, nearly every song on 'Let Go' feels like a potential smash," the article said.

"Lavigne's richly melodic songs are spiced with lyrics just specific enough to her adolescent follies to skirt the generic chick-rock trap."

Whereas Britney was more glamour and less reality-based, Avril is "much more the regular kid," the article said.

"For boys, she seems more attainable and girls can see themselves living more like her, dressing the same and being attracted to the same boys."

Avril's entry in the international music scene, however, doesn't mean it's time to say "Move over, Britney and Christina." Avril is in a league of her own, although it's only natural to compare her with the other pop music idols. Like Pink, Vanessa Carlton and Michelle Branch, Avril writes her own songs.

"I'm just coming out and I'm going to clearly be myself," Avril said. "I write what I feel. I never worry what others think. I'm gonna dress what's me. I'm gonna act what's me and I'm gonna sing what's me."

Avril was born in Napanee, a city about 100 miles southwest of Ottawa. She pays tribute to her hometown in "My World," an original cut she wrote for her album.

A skater punk, Avril also penned the jumpy track, "Sk8er Boi" for pop-punk kids. Then there's the stirring ballad, "I'm With You."

Avril is the second of the three children of devoutly religious parents **John**, a phone company worker, and **Judy**, a homemaker.

According to Entertainment Weekly, Avril was discovered by her first manager, **Cliff Fabri**, in a local bookstore when she was only 14. At that time, Avril was singing country pop tunes.

In 1998, Avril won a contest to sing a duet with fellow Canadian **Shania Twain**.

After Avril turned 16, Fabri made her audition for Arista Records, which immediately snapped her up with a two-album deal worth $1.2 million.

When Avril came to the recording studio which was scouting for **Faith Hill**-type songs, the plucky Avril was said to have told her recording bosses, "I want to rock out."

That same day, she wrote "Complicated." The rest is history.

"Avril was absolutely the architect of her record," Entertainment Weekly said.

The magazine also reported Avril got a $900,000 publishing advance to fulfill her manager's vow that the "high school dropout would be a millionaire before she sold her first record."

Locally, Avril's album is distributed by BMG Records Pilipinas.

When Avril turned 18, Arista threw a surprise birthday bash for her on the ice rink at Manhattan's Chelsea Piers, where she displayed her flair for skating.

The phenomenal success of Avril's debut album can be attributed to her clear and sassy vocals and her real-girl style. My daughter should know.

"I can't wait to be out there," Avril said. "I want to rock the world. I want people to know that my music is real and honest. It comes from the heart. I was just being true to myself."

'Dirrty' Christina

WHILE Avril is making her mark in the pop music world, Christina Aguilera is raring to break out from the teen mold with her "Dirrty" music video for her new album, "Stripped."

The latest MTV of the pop princess shows her flaunting red undies as she engages in a body rub "with a half-naked ensemble of male, female and extras."

Entertainment Weekly noted the MTV was a far cry from Christina's demure video of her 1999 hit, "Genie in a Bottle."

"The teen pop star has transformed into a pierced, tattooed, butt-baring would-be sex symbol?"

But the efforts of 21-year-old Christina paid off. The music video reigned at No. 1 on MTV's "Total Request Live" show, although the song is still far down at No. 48 on the Billboard charts.

"Whether her handlers like it or not, Aguilera has assumed control of her image and her career," said the magazine.

Christina also landed on the cover of the November issue of Rolling Stones magazine, which shows her naked, with her private parts simply covered by an electric guitar.

Rachel sings with ex Dingdong, and Jessa says she's watching

By Remy M. Umerez
Contributor

AFTER a successful "Showdown" concert at the Music Museum with Geneva Cruz recently, singer Rachel Alejandro is getting ready for another show, this time at the Casino Filipino Amphitheather on Nov. 15.

The show is called "Another First," line-produced by Starworks. Inc.

Rachel is thankful that the concert scene is alive and doing well again.

"Considering the economic crisis and all the bomb threats, I am glad that local artists are again in demand," Rachel says. "The backing out of foreign shows is another good news for us. It is hard to compete with a foreign act, especially if the foreign stars are big. *Para kaming nabunutan ng malaking tinik*, especially my producers who are first-timers."

The show is called "Another First" because it is a couple of "firsts." It will be the first time that Rachel will perform with Dingdong Avanzado after eight years. First can also refer to her first big love, Dingdong.

Rachel and Dingdong had a three-year relationship until Dingdong married another singer, Jessa Zaragosa, who incidentally has said she intends to watch the show.

The original concept was to hold a back-to-back show with Rachel and Dingdong, which for one reason or another did not happen.

"Carol Banawa is also a special guest," says Rachel. "Dingdong plays the piano very well and very few people know that. I am going to convince him to play. Do you know he still has the original keyboard where he composed all his hits? I will maximize his guest appearance by allowing him to sing a medley of the songs he popularized.

"There will be duets, of course, with the two of us," she adds. "We have not been in touch but we have remained good friends."

Is she not worried she may cause some friction in the happily married life of her former loved one?

"*Naku naman*," she exclaims. "This is just a show and there should be no room for jealousy or whatever. Why me? There were others before me."

Rachel promises to sing only familiar songs, mostly songs originally sung by male singers. This, she explains, is to avoid being compared to other female singers.

In her repertoire are songs like "May Minamahal," "Nakapagtataka," "Ang Lahat ay Para Sa 'Yo," a medley of her dad Hajji Alejandro's hits, and definitely some Broadway hits.

Some people observe that when she sings, Rachel hardly smiles.

"It is hard," she says, "and if the song is a sad one, there is no room for joy. Another thing I am not good at is delivering spiels. Even if I do a seminar under Martin (Nievara), who is the King of Talk, I will not succeed. I'd rather just sing, even 30 songs non-stop, than do a spiel."

Girlie Rodis, her manager of eight years, confirms that Rachel is the type of a person who can go on with the show even if she is burdened with a personal problem.

"*Luka-luka din iyan sa pag-ibig* but when it is time to work, she is a real professional," Girlie says. "I think singing is her therapy."

Rachel's five-year relationship with actor Lee Robin Salazar has its ups and downs but the two are still together. They are not living in and have no plans of getting married. They don't even talk about marriage.

"We enjoy being together and supporting our immediate goals, which primarily concern our respective careers," says Rachel. "Marriage? It's hard to tell. Maybe when the right time comes. I adore kids."

ALEJANDRO

Migrating to the United States is at the back of her mind, and New York is the city is her choice.

After "Another First," she leaves for small shows in Singapore and Germany. Her US stint follows next year.

One thing that Rachel doesn't do before a show is find out how the tickets have been selling. In the case of "Another First," Rachel really does not need to find out. According to Starworks, Inc., it is almost as good as sold out.

'SMALLVILLE'

Superheroes minus the tights

By Oliver M. Pulumbarit

REVIEW

THIS looks like one of the more promising new prime time fantasy series in a while. A teen-centric re-imagining of Superman's origin in his Kansas hometown, but sans the traditional cape, spandex, and even the flimsy eyeglasses disguise. It's "Roswell" meets "Dawson's Creek," which sounds redundant enough, but this contemporary re-telling works extremely well because it makes cunning use of the DC Comics character's rich, pre-existent back story.

Everyone knows Superman's history by now, but nobody quite knew it this way.

Created for a new generation, but appealing to older fans of the Kryptonian's mythos, too, "Smallville" remains true to the basic template. Baby Kal-el is the sole survivor of a doomed planet, sent to earth as a last resort, and he gains godly gifts from the system's yellow sun. The origin is augmented to tailor an essential pre-Metropolis world that supplements this usually-simplified chapter of Clark Kent's life.

In this case, the alien toddler's arrival was covered up by a destructive meteor shower that causes genetic mutations on some Smallville residents. Years after this momentous event, a teen Clark Kent (Tom Welling) is in high school, smitten with his neighbor, the winsome and unattainable Lana Lang (Kristin Kreuk).

Learning values

Raised by kindly earthling parents, he constantly learns the values that will eventually make him the greatest embodiment of superpowered heroism. This actually makes Clark almost Peter Parker-esque, hiding special advantages behind a milquetoast pretext.

Superman's beginnings have been re-told numerous times already. The comics continuity alone has a couple of revisions due to glitches in DC's almost seven decades old existence. To keep characters fresh and accessible to new readers, several miniseries have been created to add extra layers to an already towering "definitive" origin. But their characters have thrived in television as well, the Man of Steel's adventures reflecting the times.

There actually was a "Superboy" series about a decade ago, followed by the "Moonlighting"-inspired "Lois and Clark." The slightly camp romance-drama was followed by perhaps the most faithful translation, Bruce Timm's animated series simply titled "Superman."

"Smallville" is injected with packaged, ever-trendy angst, showing off the newest young things the WB Network has to offer.

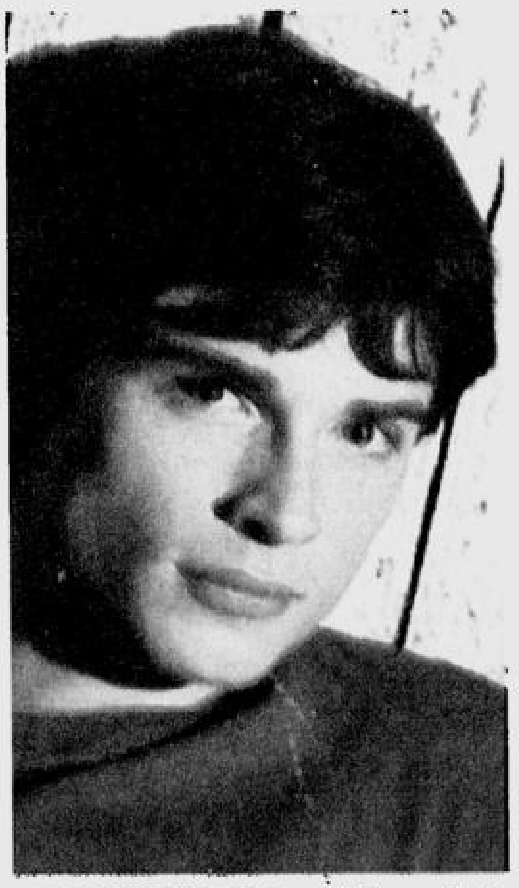
Promo clips for the show initially may have caused some viewers temporary apprehensiveness regarding this new Clark Kent's look: He sports a hairstyle that's a few inches shy of looking like a Hobbit's. But many kids these days seem to be wearing similar fashionable haircuts, so that quickly quells any preconceived ideas regarding the Teen of Steel's appearance (besides, if people can tolerate Dean Cain's un-Christopher Reeve-y looks, they can tolerate anyone). Welling can act, his Clark a wimp and a jock. He dexterously projects a necessary newness to the character.

Michael Rosenbaum as a pre-villainous Lex Luthor is aptly charismatic, and the twist that he's Clark's friend makes this incarnation all the more interesting. Saved by Clark twice in the first three episodes alone, the two "freaks" form a brotherly bond, unaware of their fated enmity years later in Metropolis.

Clark's mom

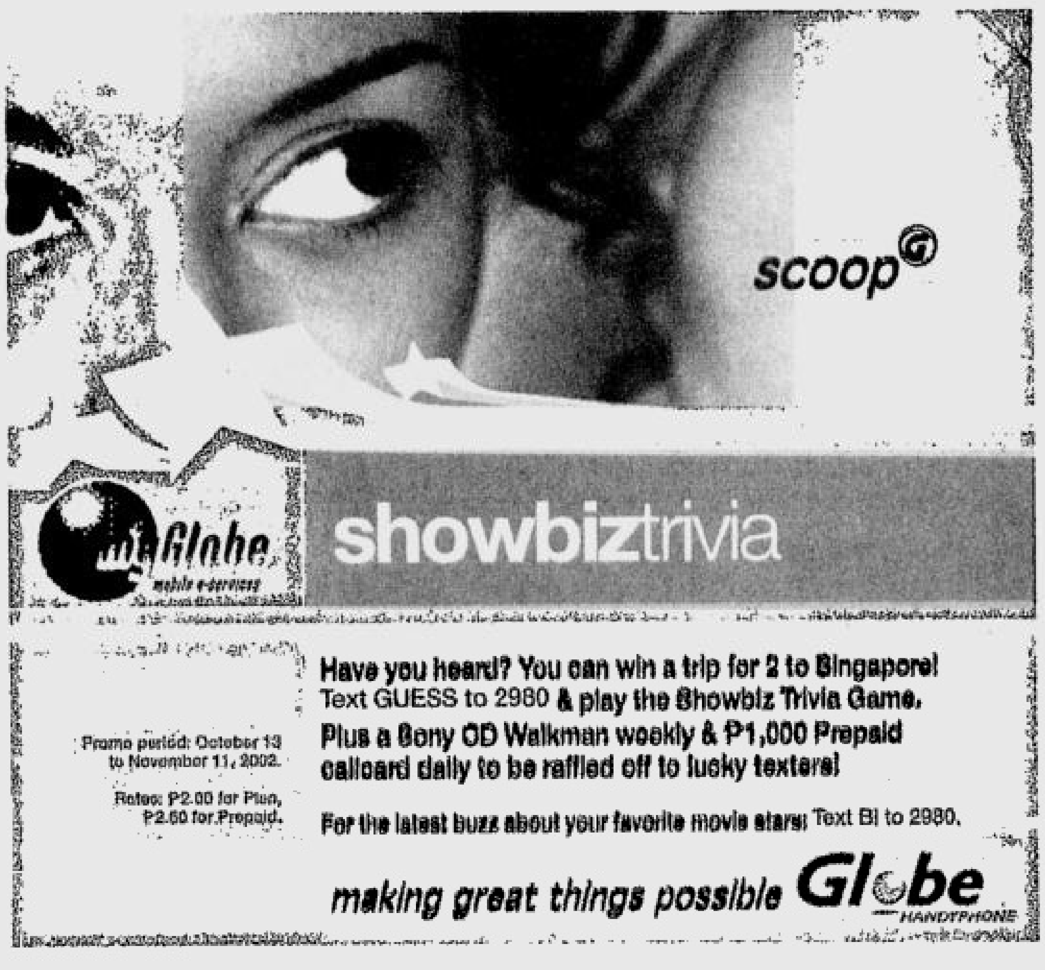
Kristin Kreuk belongs rightly to that group of actresses portraying girls-next-door freak

SUPERHEROES A28



"SMALLVILLE" STAR. Tom Welling as Clark Kent in the popular TV series.

Feel the Sunlight...
Kevyn Lettau
Live in Manila
NBC Tent, Bonifacio Global City
11.28.02
Tickets at p1,200/p923
Available at all National Bookstore
Ticketworld outlets tel. no. 891561
or at NBC tel. no. 8821622
JOEY @ 92.3 Rhythms
METRO MANILA



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G1 GLORIETTA 1

- THE SANTA CLAUSE 2
- SWEET HOME ALABAMA
- KAILANGAN KITA
- GHOST SHIP

G4 GLORIETTA 4

1. CHANGING LANES
2. TRAPPED
3. TRANSPORTER 11:40, 1:50, 4:00, 6:10, 8:20, 10:30
4. GHOST SHIP
5. SANTA CLAUSE 2
6. SWEET HOME ALABAMA
7. KAILANGAN KITA

GB1 GREENBELT 1

- THE MAN WHO WASN'T THERE (EXCLUSIVE) 12:10, 2:30, 4:50, 7:10, 9:30
- PIÑERO (Exclusive) 12:50, 3:00, 5:10, 7:20, 9:30
- REGINE VELASQUEZ - SONGBIRD SONGS NOV. 8-9, 21-22-23, 29-30 / DEC. 6-7, 13-14, 20-21, 27-28

GB3 GREENBELT 3

- TRANSPORTER 12:40, 2:50, 5:00, 7:10, 9:20, 11:30
- SWEET HOME ALABAMA 10:50, 1:20, 3:50, 6:20, 8:50, 11:20
- THE SANTA CLAUSE 2 12:05, 2:20, 4:35, 6:50, 9:05, 11:20
- GHOST SHIP 12:05, 2:20, 4:35, 6:50, 9:05, 11:20
- CHANGING LANES 12:40, 2:50, 5:00, 7:10, 9:20, 11:30

ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER

- SWEET HOME ALABAMA
- CHANGING LANES
- KAILANGAN KITA
- GHOST SHIP
- THE SANTA CLAUSE 2

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(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

1 (DOLBY)	SANTA CLAUSS
2 (SDDS)	BALISTIC ECK VS' SEVER
3 (DTS)	GHOSTSHIP
4	TRANSPORTER
5	CHANGING LANES
6	TRAPPED
7	SWEETHOME ALABAMA
8	TWO TIMER
9	KAILANGAN KITA
10	KAILANGAN KITA

Pearl Plaza Cinemas
(Parañaque) tel. 853.4486

1	RESERVE
2	RESERVE
3 (DTS)	RESERVE
4	RESERVE
5	RESERVE
6 (DTS)	RESERVE
Golden Pearl THX	RESERVE

Masagana CINEMA 1 2 & 3
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 : 833.3274

1	TWO TIMER
2	KAILANGAN KITA
3	DALAGINDING

starmall Movies
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Mandaluyong) tel 724.4986

1	KAILANGAN KITA
2	GHOSTSHIP
3	TWO TIMER
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX)	TRANSPORTER
5	DALAGINDING

METROPOLIS star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Alabang) tel 850.4285

1	GHOSTSHIP
2	DALAGINDING
3	KAILANGAN KITA
4	TWO TIMER
5	TRAPPED
6	TRANSPORTER

M star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Las Pinas)
tel 873.5004

1	SOON TO OPEN
2	SOON TO OPEN

PREMIERE CINEMA THX
(Makati City) tel 751.2010 to 13

TRANSPORTER
NOV. 6,7,8,2002 TIME: 6:00 PM TO 7:30 PM.
TIME: 8:10 PM TO 9:40 PM.
TIME: 10:20 PM TO 11:50 PM.
NOV. 9, 2002 TIME: 3:50 PM. TO 5:20 PM.
TIME: 6:00 PM TO 7:30 PM.
TIME: 8:10 PM TO 9:40 PM

Center Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1	BAKIT NGAYON KA LANG
2	SINGSING NI LOLA

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

1	KAILANGAN KITA
2	DALAGINDING
3	RESERVE
4	RESERVE

GOTESCO CINEMA

Gotesco City
(Manila) tel 734.8588

1	KAILANGAN KITA
4	TWO TIMER
5	TRANSPORTER
6	CHANGING LANES
7 (DTS)	GHOSTSHIP
8 (SDDS)	TRAPPED
9 (DOLBY)	SANTA CLAUSE

Gotesco Caloocan
tel 362.3508

2	RESERVE

Gotesco Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 365.7928

1	TWO TIMER
2	KAILANGAN KITA
3	KAILANGAN KITA
4 (SDDS)	TRAPPED
5	TRANSPORTER
6 (DOLBY)	SANTA CLAUSE
7 (DTS)	GHOSTSHIP
8	ALYAS BOMBA QUEEN
9	DALAGINDING

Gotesco Commonwealth
tel 951.0082

1	GHOSTSHIP
2 (SDDS)	KAILANGAN KITA
3 (DTS)	TWO TIMER
4 (DOLBY)	TRANSPORTER
5	SANTA CLAUSE

Gotesco Ortigas
tel 656.6795

1	KAILANGAN KITA
2	TWO TIMER
3 (DTS)	TRAPPED
4	SANTA CLAUSE
5 (SDDS)	GHOSTSHIP

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470

1	TWO TIMER

Sampaquita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888

1	KAILANGAN KITA

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724

Dilson	TWO TIMER
Lords	DALAGINDING
Jennet	KAILANGAN KITA

MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1	KAILANGAN KITA
2	TWO TIMER
3	GHOSTSHIP

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto SUPER CINERAMA
tel 733.4238

1 (DOLBY)	TRANSPORTER
2	TWO TIMER
3	GHOSTSHIP
4	KAILANGAN KITA
5	DALAGINDING

FRC Cinema
(Talaba Bacoor Cavite)

1	RESERVE
2	RESERVE

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029

1	TWO TIMER
2	KAILANGAN KITA

THE CENTER OF ENTERTAINMENT
Araneta

MALL CINEPLEX 7
tel 911.3101 loc. 821.8242.8400

1	KAILANGAN KITA
2	TWO TIMER
3	GHOSTSHIP
4 (SDDS)	TRANSPORTER
5 (DTS)	SWEETHOME ALABAMA
6	TRAPPED
7	CHANGING LANES

FarmersPlaza CINEMAS
tel 911.3101 loc. 821.8242.8400

1	DALAGINDING
2	TWO TIMER

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
tel (049) 534.2185 / 534.2198

1	TWO TIMER
2	KAILANGAN KITA
3 (DTS)	TRANSPORTER

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	TWO TIMER
2 (DTS)	KAILANGAN KITA
3 (DOLBY)	TRANSPORTER
4	GHOSTSHIP

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

1	KAILANGAN KITA
2 (DOLBY)	GHOSTSHIP
3 (DTS)	TRANSPORTER
4	TWO TIMER

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1	SINGSING NI LOLA
2	KAILANGAN KITA
3 (DOLBY)	TWO TIMER
4	RESERVE

Cinema 2000 MetroTown
(Tarlac) tel(045) 982.1729

1	KAILANGAN KITA
2	TWO TIMER
3 (DOLBY)	HALLOWEEN
4 (DTS)	RED DRAGON

Magic Star Cinema
(Tarlac City) tel (045) 611.4305

1 (DOLBY)	RED DRAGON
2 (DTS)	TWO TIMER
3	KAILANGAN KITA

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	KAILANGAN KITA
2	RESERVE
3 (DTS)	DALAGINDING
4	ALYAS BOMBA QUEEN

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	TRANSPORTER
2	KAILANGAN KITA
3 (DTS)	TWO TIMER
4	GHOSTSHIP
5	BED TIME STORY

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1	TWO TIMER
2	KAILANGAN KITA
3	GHOSTSHIP

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 249.2558

1	TWO TIMER
2	KAILANGAN KITA
3	GHOSTSHIP

Mega Center Mall
(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283

1	SINGSING NI LOLA
2	TWO TIMER
3	KAILANGAN KITA
4	RED DRAGON

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

1	KAILANGAN KITA
2	RESERVE

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1	BED TIME STORY
2	KAILANGAN KITA
3	SINGSING NI LOLA

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	SINGSING NI LOLA
2	ALYAS BOMBA QUEEN
3	KAILANGAN KITA
4	RED DRAGON

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1	SWEET HOME ALABAMA
2	SINGSING NI LOLA
3 (SDDS)	GHOSTSHIP
4	BALLISTIC ECK VS' SEVER

*Movies are subject to change without prior notice

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SM Dial-A-Movie Tel. 833-9999
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1	CHANGING LANES
2	TWO TIMER
3	GHOST SHIP
4	STA. CLAUSE 2
5	TRANSPORTER
6	KAILANGAN KITA
7	DALAGINDING
8	TRAPPED

SM CENTERPOINT
7149522 -7161416

1	KAILANGAN KITA
2	DALAGINDING
3	TRANSPORTER
4	TWO TIMER
5	CHANGING LANES
6	STA. CLAUSE 2
7	GHOST SHIP
8	SWEET HOME ALABAMA
9	TRAPPED
10	KAILANGAN KITA

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
9350749

1	SWEET HOME ALABAMA
2	STA. CLAUSE 2
3	SINGSING NI LOLA
4	TRANSPORTER
5	CHANGING LANES
6	KAILANGAN KITA
7	GHOST SHIP
8	TRAPPED
9	KAILANGAN KITA
10	TWO TIMER
11	9 MORNINGS
12	DALAGINDING

SM CITY MANILA
5236240

1	CHANGING LANES
2	TRAPPED
3	KAILANGAN KITA
4	SWEET HOME ALABAMA
5	BROTHERHOOD OF THE WOLF
6	TRANSPORTER
7	DALAGINDING
8	STA. CLAUSE 2
9	KAILANGAN KITA
10	SINGSING NI LOLA
11	GHOST SHIP
12	TWO TIMER

SM MEGAMALL
6331901 • 6329401

1	RED DRAGON
2	CHANGING LANES
3	TRANSPORTER
4	SWEET HOME ALABAMA
5	TRAPPED
6	BROTHERHOOD OF THE WOLF
7	TWO TIMER
8	DALAGINDING
9	KAILANGAN KITA
10	GHOST SHIP
11	SINGSING NI LOLA
12	STA. CLAUSE 2

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
9295452

1	KAILANGAN KITA
2	GHOST SHIP
3	DALAGINDING
4	TWO TIMER
5	STA. CLAUSE 2
6	TRAPPED
7	TRANSPORTER
8	CHANGING LANES

SM SOUTHMALL
8066888

1	CHANGING LANES
2	GHOST SHIP
3	TRANSPORTER
4	TWO TIMER
5	STA. CLAUSE 2
6	SINGSING NI LOLA
7	KAILANGAN KITA
8	TRAPPED
9	SWEET HOME ALABAMA
10	DALAGINDING

SM CITY CEBU
2313876

1	BALLISTIC: ECKS VS. SEVER
2	CHANGING LANES
3	HALLOWEEN RESURRECTION
4	MR. DEEDS
5	TWO TIMER
6	BIRTHDAY GIRL
7	GHOST SHIP
8	KAILANGAN KITA

SM CITY ILOILO
3209422

1	BEDTIME STORIES
2	CLOSED
3	PLUTO NASH
4	KAILANGAN KITA
5	RED DRAGON
6	MR. DEEDS
7	CLOSED
8	TWO TIMER

SM CITY PAMPANGA
7128015

1	GHOST SHIP
2	PLUTO NASH
3	SWEET HOME ALABAMA
4	SINGSING NI LOLA
5	TWO TIMER
6	KAILANGAN KITA

SM SUPER CTR. SUCAT
8294975

1	CHANGING LANES
2	GHOST SHIP
3	KAILANGAN KITA
4	STA. CLAUSE 2

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN
2514302

1	GHOST SHIP
2	STA. CLAUSE 2
3	KAILANGAN KITA
4	TWO TIMER

SM CITY DAVAO
2976998

1	BALLISTIC: ECKS VS. SEVER
2	MR. DEEDS
3	BEDTIME STORIES
4	TWO TIMER
5	KAILANGAN KITA
6	POSSESSION

SM BICUTAN

1
2
3
4

WATCH OUT FOR THE OPENING ON NOVEMBER 29, 2002

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO

1
2
3
4

WATCH OUT FOR THE OPENING ON NOVEMBER 15, 2002

THE PODIUM CINEMA
18 ADB Avenue Ortigas Center Mandaluyong City
633-8976

1 STA. CLAUSE 2
11:40 FS/12:10 MF/2:20/4:30/6:40/8:50/10:30 LFS/11:00 LMF/12:40 END

2 CHANGING LANES
11:40 FS/12:10 MF/2:20/4:30/6:40/8:50/10:30 LFS/11:00 LMF/12:40 END

LATE NIGHT SCREENING DURING FRIDAYS AND SATURDAYS
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Galleria
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1 THX	THE TRANSPORTER
2	TRAPPED
3	RED DRAGON
4	SWEET HOME ALABAMA
5	KAILANGAN KITA
6	CHANGING LANES
7	SANTA CLAUSE 2
8	TWO TIMER
9	GHOST SHIP
10	DALAGINDING

MATINEE PRICE: P80 THX cinema / P65 level cinemas
Mon.- Fri. / 10am- 4pm (EXCEPT HOLIDAYS)

Ermita
536 -7809- 12

OPENS ON NOV. 13 - HARRY POTTER	
2	SWEET HOME ALABAMA
3	SANTA CLAUSE 2
4	THE TRANSPORTER
5	GHOST SHIP
6	KAILANGAN KITA
7	CHANGING LANES

Metro East - Marcos hway
682- 8193 / 8280

1	THE TRANSPORTER
2	CHANGING LANES
3	GHOST SHIP
4	TWO TIMER
5	SWEET HOME ALABAMA
6	KAILANGAN KITA
7	SANTA CLAUSE 2
8	DALAGINDING

Novaliches
935- 3229 - 30

1	THE TRANSPORTER
2	CHANGING LANES
3	GHOST SHIP
4	KAILANGAN KITA
5	TWO TIMER
6	SWEET HOME ALABAMA
7	SANTA CLAUSE 2
8	DALAGINDING

Imus
471- 8188 / 875- 3838

1	THE TRANSPORTER
2	CHANGING LANES
3	TWO TIMER
4	DALAGINDING
5	KAILANGAN KITA
6	SANTA CLAUSE 2

Bacolod
441- 0453 / 0459

1	MR. DEEDS
2	KAILANGAN KITA
3	RED DRAGON
4	BIRTHDAY GIRL
5	"O"
6	SINGSING NI LOLA

Iloilo
336- 8077 - 78

1	RED DRAGON
2	MR. DEEDS
3	KAILANGAN KITA
4	BEDTIME STORIES
5	TWO TIMER
6	PLUTO NASH

Star Mills- Sn. Fernando, Pamp.
875- 1927
961- 5318 / 5270

1	PLUTO NASH
2	CHANGING LANES
3	KAILANGAN KITA
4	TWO TIMER
5	BEDTIME STORIES
6	GHOST SHIP

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Galleria :	GALE
Ermita :	MLA
Metro East PASIG :	MEP
Novaliches :	NOVA
Imus :	IMUS
Starmills :	STAR
Iloilo :	ILO
Bacolod :	BAC

Send to : 2333 Globe / 225 Smart

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Warning from advertisers

From page A27

opening-day boasts, and wait instead for objective movie reviews or advance word from friends who've seen a film (and whose opinion we respect).

Trouble is, some "reviews" are tainted these days, so readers have to exercise caution in deciding which write-ups to believe. With all the self-serving ploys some producers resort to these days, deciding which movies are worth our while can require us to exercise all of our—creativity!

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	GAMITAN / VOODOO
ODEON	TRANSPORTER
ODEON-2	BUKAS BABAHA ANG DUGO / SENSUAL
ROBEN	DALAGINDING
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	AUSTIN POWER / DERAILED
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET-2	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
QUEZON-1	DALAGINDING
REMAR	DALAGINDING
REMAR-2	ALYAS BOMBA QUEEN
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	KAILANGAN KITA
B	TWO TIMER
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	SANTA CLAUSE 2
CINEMA-2	GHOST SHIP
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	ALYAS BOMBA QUEEN
CINEMA-2	BEDTIME STORIES
CINEMA-3	HUWAG MONG TAKASAN
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	SINGSING NI LOLA
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	MUNTING TINIG
CINEMA-6	BALLISTIC
CINEMA-7	BAKIT NGAYON KA LANG
CINEMA-8	RED DRAGON
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	GHOST SHIP
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	SWEET HOME ALABAMA
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	HALLOWEEN RESSURECTION
CINEMA-12	SANTA CLAUSE 2
CINEMA-14	SINGSING NI LOLA
CINEMA-15	9 MORNINGS
LORES	
CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN	
CINEMA 1	MR DEEDS
CINEMA 2	9 MORNINGS
CINEMA 3	BESTMAN
CINEMA 4	K-19
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARANAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

THE PODIUM CINEMA
16 ADB Avenue, Ortigas Center, Mandaluyong City
Tel : 638 9781 - 85 • 633 8976

1	STA. CLAUSE 2	11:40 FS/12:10 MF/2:20/4:30/6:40/8:50/ 10:30 LFS/11:00 LMF/12:40 END
2	CHANGING LANES	11:40 FS/12:10 MF/2:20/4:30/6:40/8:50/ 10:30 LFS/11:00 LMF/12:40 END

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Matinee : P100.00 - Screening until 5pm • Monday thru Friday
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POWER PLANT CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City
Tel. No: 8981440-41
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND•EX

SANTA CLAUSE 2 GP 12:50,3:00,5:10, 7:20,9:30	TRANSPORTER P13 12:40,3:00,5:20, 7:40,10:00	CHANGING LANES P13 12:40,3:05,5:30, 7:45,10:00
TRAPPED R18 12:50,3:05,5:20, 7:35,9:50	GHOST SHIP R18 11:40,1:40,3:40, 5:40,7:40,9:40	SWEET HOME ALABAMA P13 12:50,3:10,5:30, 7:50,10:10

MATINEE P80.00 - FREE SEATING - SCREENINGS BEFORE 5 PM - MON. TO FRI.

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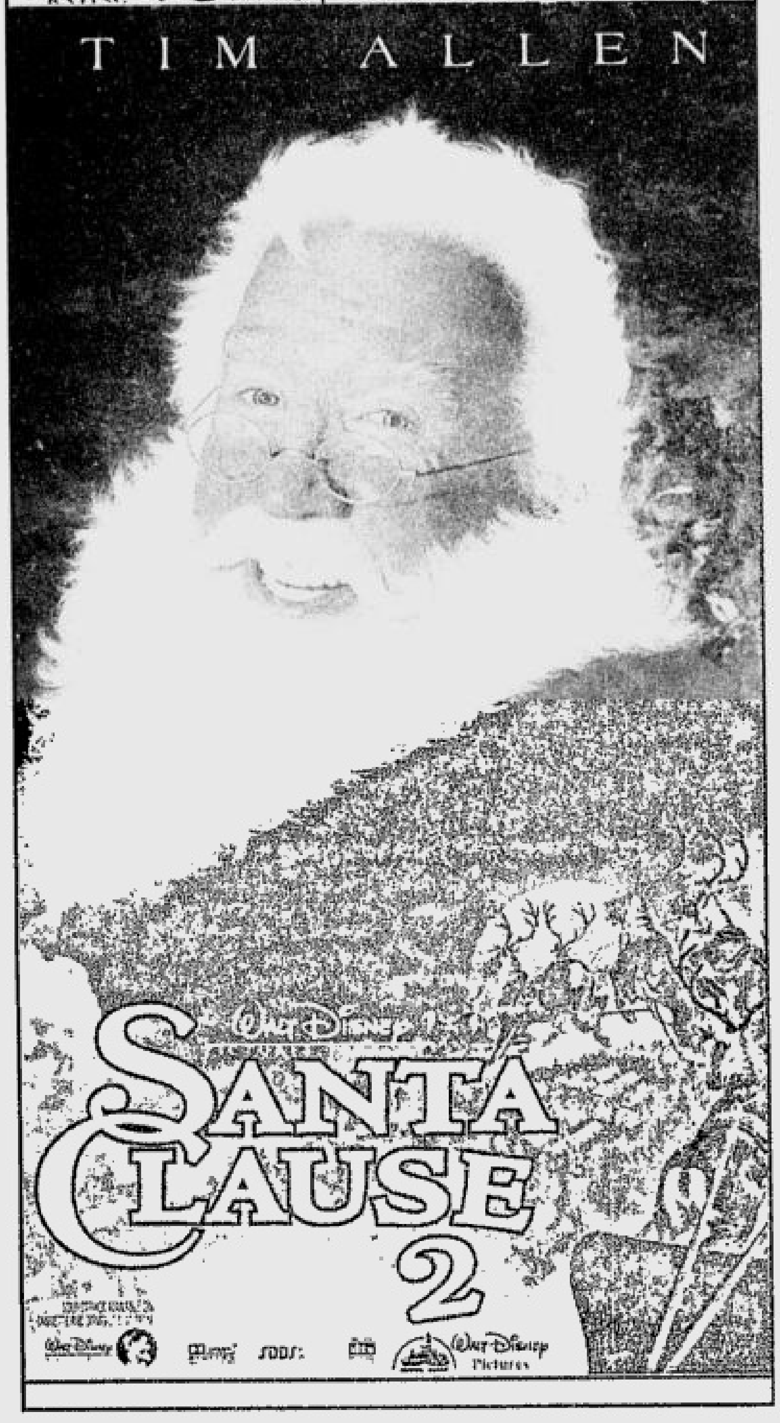
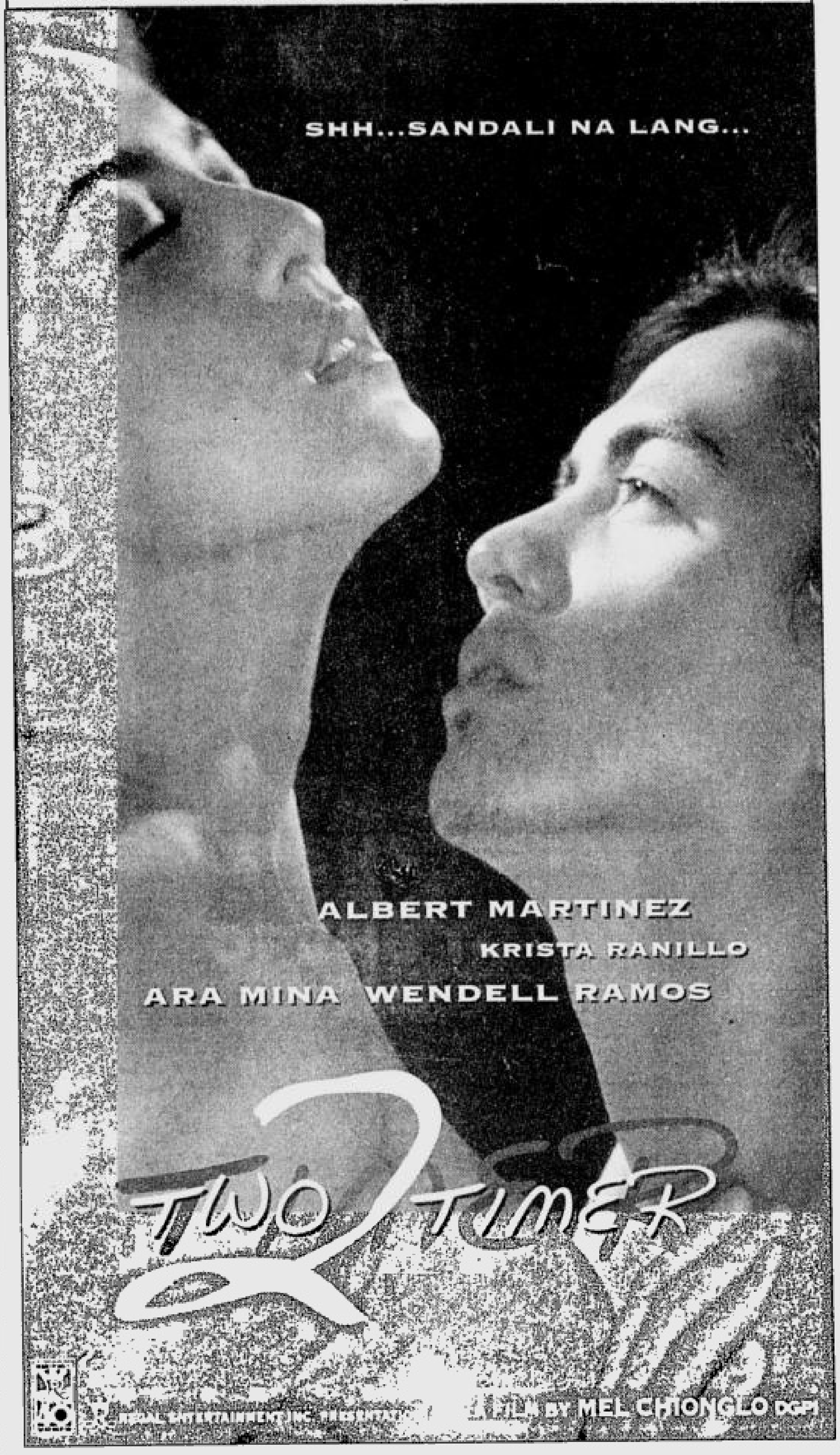
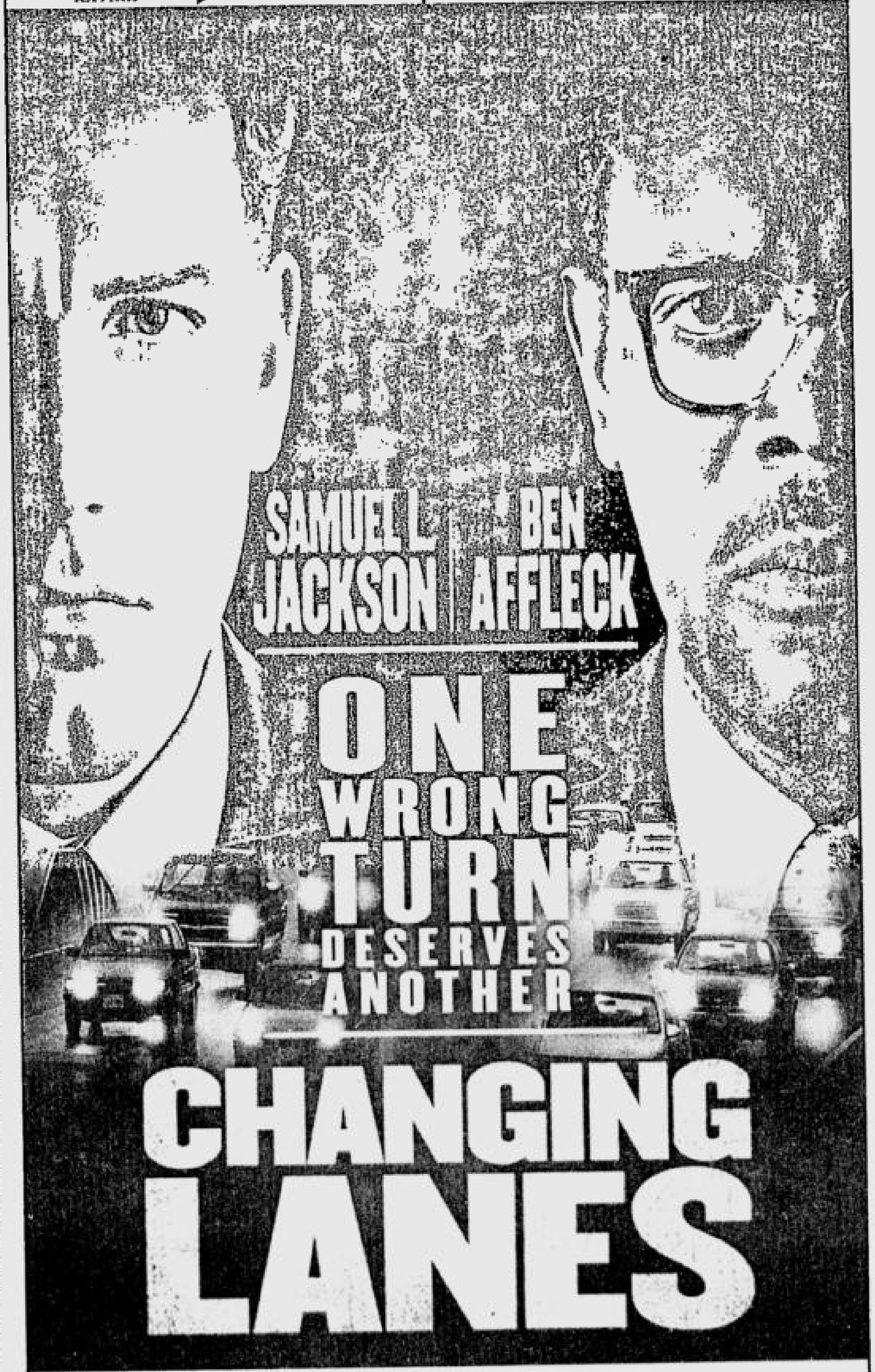
NOW SHOWING
MTRCB RATING ▶ G General Patronage | ALL AGES ADMITTED


TIM ALLEN
Walt Disney
SANTA CLAUSE 2
Walt Disney Pictures

GRAND OPENING TODAY!
MTRCB RATING ▶ R RESTRICTED | Strictly for ADULTS No one below 18 yrs. may be admitted.


SHH...SANDALI NA LANG...
ALBERT MARTINEZ
KRISTA RANILLO
ARA MINA WENDELL RAMOS
TWO 2 TIMER
REGAL ENTERTAINMENT INC. PRESENTS
A FILM BY MEL CHIONGLO DGPI

MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 | Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult.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ENTERTAINMENT
Editor Louie C. Camino

'Ghost Ship:' Hot idea, wet execution

JULIANA Margulies and little Katie. The movie's ghosts are ineffectual and have very vague motives in their interactions with the film's live characters.

By Ruben M. Cruz Jr.
Contributor

REVIEW

EVEN AS a child, I liked scaring myself. Every cat that stared at me was a ghoul in disguise. Every strange noise I heard at night was a portent of the worst fears imaginable.

I'd cover myself with a blanket, believing it to be an impenetrable shroud that would keep out otherworldly beings. But just in case they break through, I'd have a rosary hanging around my neck. I dared not expose any part of my flesh outside the shroud until a family member came to rescue me, for I knew they were just there. Waiting. Watching.

I laugh about it now. It's silly. When I try to scare my kids—much to the consternation of my wife—they'd play along for a while. But once I get really into it, they'd shut me up. "Silly Papa," three-year-old Jacob would say. "There are no ghosts, no monsters, no vampires. Only Papa."

Atmosphere, characters

Still, it's fun getting scared, especially of the unknown and the supernatural. That's why horror movies are a real treat. All alone in the first row, on the last screening—that's how I like to watch them; or real close to the TV, past midnight, with all the lights out.

The really good horror films blow you away with atmosphere, and with characters so frighteningly evil they haunt you in your dreams, or worse, during your trips to the john. The terror they infuse is both real and psychological.

One doesn't expect a very literate plot. For sure characters in a horror film will be running around, making stupid mistakes. For sure there's going to be a body count, a casualty list, only a matter of who is left triumphant in the end.

BYRNE

But really good horror films will offer you more. I can't remember the title of the first Dracula film that gave me real chills but I do remember that Christopher Lee did not even appear until the last hour of the film. Lee is now more popularly known among the younger generation (darn, I hate saying that) for playing Count Dooku in "Attack of the Clones" and Saruman in "The Lord of the Rings." The film was slow and plodding, but it was also oh-so-creepy. The wait, the anticipation, delivered the goods.

Like I said, it's all about atmosphere and characters.

I miss watching horror films like that, and it is today's typical Halloween fare like "Ghost Ship" that makes me miss them more.

Lowered expectations

I basically came to see "Ghost Ship" just looking for a few skin-crawling moments, hopefully even a few scenes that would make me want to jump out of my seat and run out of the theater, but I guess even such supposedly lowered expectations are too high for the film to stand up to.

Director Steve Beck ("Thirteen Ghosts") makes a valiant effort in the first five minutes or so of the film. "Ghost Ship" opens with a carefree and romantic scene on board the Antonia Graza, a Titanic-like, Italian cruise ship. A sultry singer is crooning an exotic love song and guests are having a ball.

People just walking into the theater, trying to find seats, may just be wondering if they're in the right movie. They don't have to wonder long, though, as the pristine ambiance suddenly cues in all manner of overblown carnage. I won't bother to describe what happens onscreen because this short "no-blinking-please" sequence is perhaps the best part of the film (at least for those who have a taste for the gruesome), the reason perhaps why it is played all over again later on, with additional expositions.

I've got no complaints about the replay. It's filling the time it takes to get there that's the problem. Forty years after what happened in Antonia Graza, a salvage crew led by a crusty captain (Gabriel Byrne) finds it drifting and deserted in the Bering Strait. They try to tow the gold mine back to port but the ship and its unseen inhabitants of course have other ideas.

Great theme, great idea, actually. A haunted-house story in the open sea is so full of possibilities. But the screenplay later turns out be as hollow as the jack o' lanterns my kids were carrying to trick-or-treat. There are a few candies inside (Beck relies heavily on loud, horror-movie music and cheesy digital effects to work up the tension) but these certainly are not enough to prevent the audience/trick-or-treaters from crying, "Trick!"

Few shocks

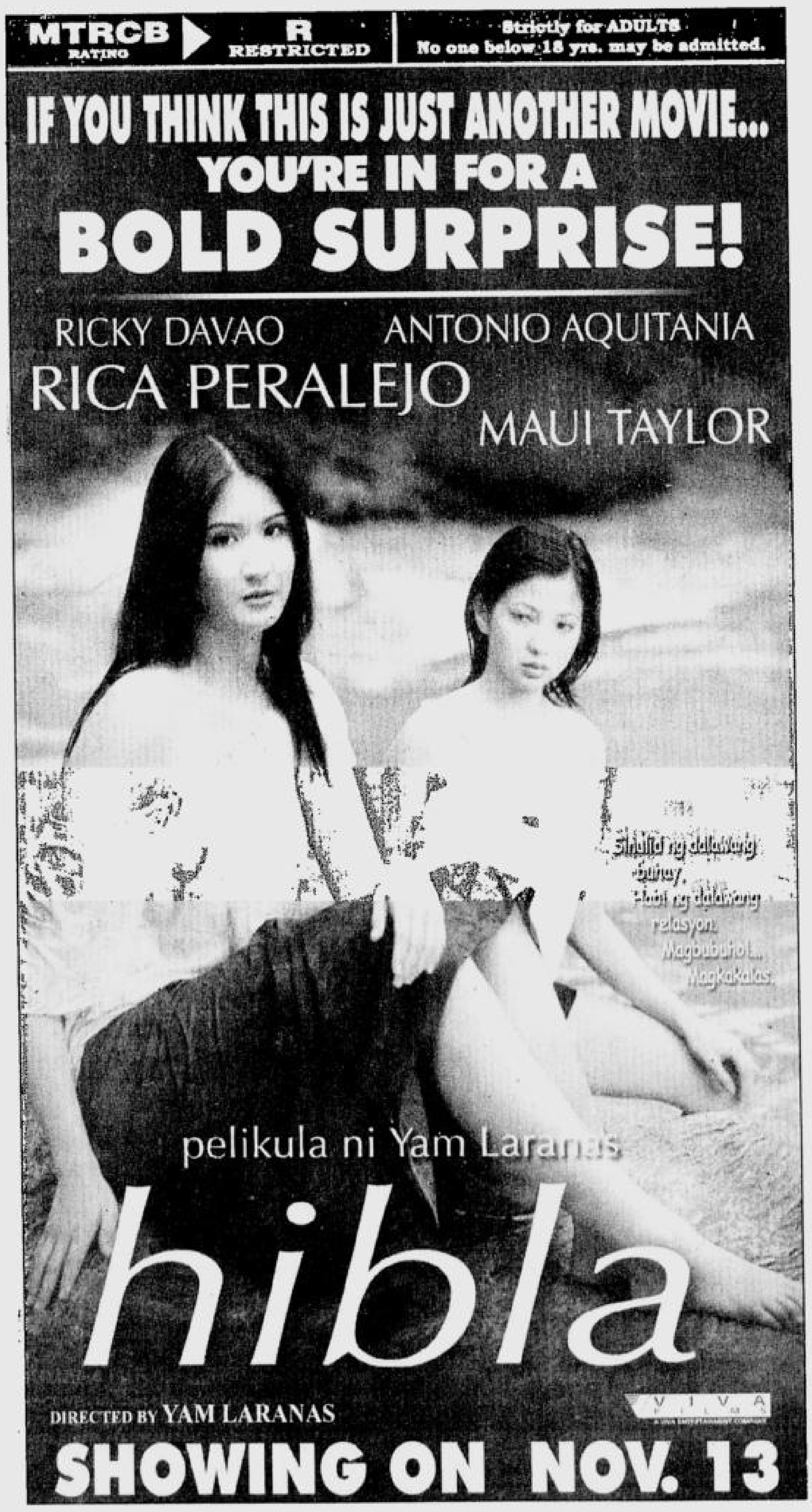
All I could think about during the next 90 minutes of tedium was how a theme so promising could go so bad.

The film's biggest letdown is the almost complete absence of real scares. I'd even settle for those mindless shocks, those "Boo!" moments we have come to expect from contemporary slasher films, but "Ghost Ship" has few of them as well. The action is almost relegated to dragging the camera down a ship's empty corridors (it looks more like an old, abandoned warehouse actually and perhaps it really was shot in one) and poring obsessively over pointless props.

The ghosts in "Ghost Ship" are a disappointing lot. They are remarkably ineffectual and have very vague motives in their interactions with the film's supposedly live characters. You can't blame them. The theology that has these lost souls literally trapped inside a ship with a servant of Satan trying to add more souls to meet his quota is absurd. And it ironically reduces the live ones—the salvage crew composed of gifted actors like Byrne, Julianna Margulies (from TV's "E.R."), Isaiah Washington and Ron Eldard—to a bunch of stiffs.

I know that regardless of what I say, a film with "Ghost" in the title will surely lure in more than a few people during this season of scaring. It certainly lured me to brave heavy traffic from Malate to Megamall.

If I only knew, I would have settled for a good blanket and some imagination.



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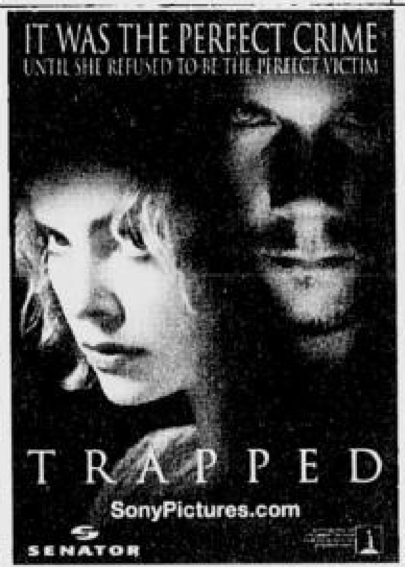
IT WAS THE PERFECT CRIME
UNTIL SHE REFUSED TO BE THE PERFECT VICTIM
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But things go very wrong when they try the scheme on Dr. and Mrs. Will Jennings (Charlize Theron, *SWEET NOVEMBER* and Stuart Townsend, *QUEEN OF THE DAMNED*), in part because their daughter Abby (Dakota Fanning, *I AM SAM*) is asthmatic, and in part because the Jennings find out more than Joe Hickley wants them to know.

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BUSINESS

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October inflation eases to 2.7%

By Doris C. Dumlao and Clarissa S. Batino

THE PHILIPPINES posted a lower-than-expected inflation rate of 2.7 percent in October, giving the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas more flexibility in setting interest rates.

The National Statistics Office said October's rate was down from 2.9 percent the previous month as stable food prices brought by the good weather offset some upswing in the prices of basic utilities and services.

The October figures brought the inflation rate for the first 10 months of the year to 3.2 percent, well within the government's inflation target of 4.5 to 5.5 percent for the whole of 2002.

"That's good news. It's at the lower end of our estimate of 2.7-3.1 (percent). It reinforces our neutral policy stance and probably allows us more flexibility," Bangko Sentral Governor Rafael Buenaventura said.

"That's a surprise. I was looking for close to 3.2 percent. It's certainly a surprise given higher oil prices," said Luz Lorenzo, ATR Kim Eng Securities research head. "It means the central bank can continue to hold the line on interest rates for now."

The Bangko Sentral has kept its benchmark overnight borrowing rate on hold since March at 7 percent, the lowest since 1992.

The inflation rate for Metro Manila slipped to 2.6 percent in October from 2.9 percent in September while the rate for the rural areas was steady at 2.8 percent in October.

The downturn in the October inflation rate was attributed to slowdowns in price increases in such key sectors as food, beverages and tobacco, which fell to 1.9 percent in October from 2.2 percent the previous month.

Inflation for the housing and repairs sector also fell to 4.3 percent in October from 4.5 percent in September while the rates for clothing and miscellaneous items remained flat at 2.5 and 1.8 percent, respectively.

However, analysts said the rise in consumer prices was expected to accelerate again in November and December as consumer spending peaks during the Christmas holidays.

Astro del Castillo, head of research at A&A Securities, said the slower inflation rate did not come as a surprise. "But usually, inflation goes up in the fourth quarter due to the upswing caused by consumer spending in time for Christmas, so it's possible that it has bottomed out."

Analysts said that the rising trend in petroleum pump prices remained a major risk to inflation, specially since crude oil in

OCTOBER/ B2

RP suffering from investors' misconception

By Ronnel W. Domingo
(Last of two parts)

B-One

THERE is a small group of exploration firms whose confidence in the Philippines matches that of the government.

"They are spreading the world, but it is our job to tell the rest of the community," Assistant Energy Secretary Lasse Aznar Holopainen says.

"We have the Philpra (Philippine Petroleum Resource Assessment) data, but until we get the resource out of the ground, it would be difficult to prove. we are certainly under-explored," he adds.

Holopainen says the Philippines suffers from investors' misconception that there is nothing to look for here.

"There was heavy drilling in the 1960s and 1970s, but the exploration firms did not find much. In a way, it was almost guesswork with the data that were available. Now that data have changed and we have a lot more, we are going to change their mindset," he says.

Holopainen maintains that the chances of striking a rich field here should be comparable to those of the country's neighbors, which have very good track records in terms of oil and gas exploration.

The South China Sea, for instance, is considered very prospective. The largest oil field discovered there has a reserve of over 900 million barrels.

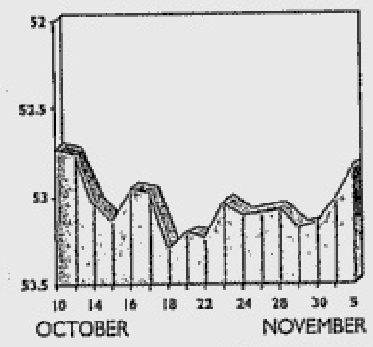
"We are part of that area, Palawan had been on the same (geologic) shelf where South China Sea is," Holopainen says. "If you look at the drilling history in Palawan, the rates of success are very high by world standards."

Out of 50 wells drilled in the Northwest Palawan basin, 11 have been developed or producing at profitable volumes, 17

RP/ B5

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



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As of 5 p.m., Nov. 5, 2002

¥ 121.86 = $ 1
As of 5 p.m., Nov. 5, 2002

GOLD: $313.30-313.80
per ounce Hong Kong, Nov. 5, 2002

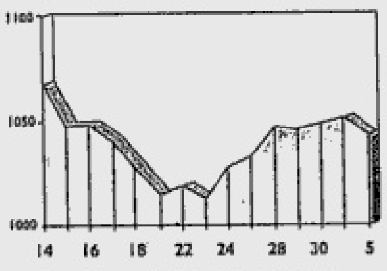
CURRENCIES

Nov. 05, 2002 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.001904	1	52.995
Japan	Yen	0.008199	0.008183	0.4337
United Kingdom	Pound	1.560765	1.5578	82.5556
Hongkong	Dollar	0.12847	0.128226	6.7953
Switzerland	Franc	0.683567	0.682268	36.1568
Canada	Dollar	0.644352	0.643128	34.0826
Singapore	Dollar	0.568779	0.567698	30.0852
Australia	Dollar	0.56107	0.560004	29.6774
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.657711	2.652661	140.5778
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.267153	0.266645	14.1309
Brunei	Dollar	0.566848	0.565771	29.983
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000109	0.000109	0.0058
Thailand	Baht	0.023165	0.023121	1.2253
UAE	Dirham	0.27279	0.272272	14.4291
Euro	Euro	1	0.9981	52.8943
ArgentinaPeso	0.283024	0.282486	14.9703	
Brazil	Real	0.285361	0.284819	15.094
Denmark	Kroner	0.134529	0.134273	7.1158
India	Rupee	0.02076	0.020721	1.0981
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.263694	0.263193	13.9479
Mexico	New Peso	0.098448	0.098261	5.2073
New Zealand	Dollar	0.49784	0.496894	26.3329
Norway	Kroner	0.135886	0.135628	7.1876
Pakistan	Rupee	0.017097	0.017065	0.9044
South Africa	Rand	0.101459	0.101266	5.3666
Korea	Won	0.000823	0.000821	0.0435
Sweden	Kroner	0.10972	0.109512	5.8036
Syria	Pound	0.022667	0.022624	1.199
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.028999	0.028944	1.5339
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000702	0.000701	0.0371

STOCK MARKET

Stocks end lower on budget gap concern

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B4)

SHARES closed slightly lower yesterday as budget deficit concerns offset good news on the inflation front and earnings from Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT) that were in line with analysts expectations, traders said.

Earlier in the day, the government announced that consumer prices in October rose 2.7 percent year-on-year, well below analysts estimates of 3.1 percent.

"There are a lot of other issues that are foremost in investors minds right now, principally the budget deficit and the government need to make additional borrowings to finance it," BPI Securities analyst Spencer Yap said.

The low number, however, did give the central bank scope to keep key overnight interest rates at current levels, he said.

The main index ended down 8.67 points, or 0.82 percent, at 1,042.31 points. The broader All Shares index closed up 13.13 points, or 2.15 percent, at 625.24 as investors focused on accumulating some second tier issues.

Turnover was a dismal P179.96 million, down from P219.5 million on Monday, reflecting continued investor disinterest in the Philippine market.

Yap said investors shrugged off nine months to September income and revenue gains at PLDT, preferring to focus on the company's sizeable debt and an ownership row.

"They were looking more at the debt and the ownership issue and that overrode the relatively good earnings numbers," he said.

PLDT shares closed unchanged at P277. Cellular unit Pilipino Telephone Corp. also ended flat at 20 centavos after announcing a nine months net loss of 2.85 billion.

Reuters

PAL sees P1-B profit

PHILIPPINE Airlines (PAL) expects to generate a net income of at least P1 billion in its current fiscal year ending March 2003 as margins improve substantially despite flat passenger volume.

PAL president Avelino Zapanta said this would be PAL's biggest profit haul in its history and would make it one of the few airlines in the black amid an industry slump brought by the lingering threat of terrorism and negative travel advisories. "I guess Filipinos will continue to travel overseas despite the risks because they have to earn a living abroad."

Zapanta said PAL—controlled by taipan Lucio Tan—has substantially improved its bottom line through adjustments in capacity and flight allocations and reduction in costs, particularly fuel. Zapanta said PAL's flights, albeit fewer in number than last year, were carrying more passengers than empty seats with a load rate of 81 percent versus 67 percent last year.

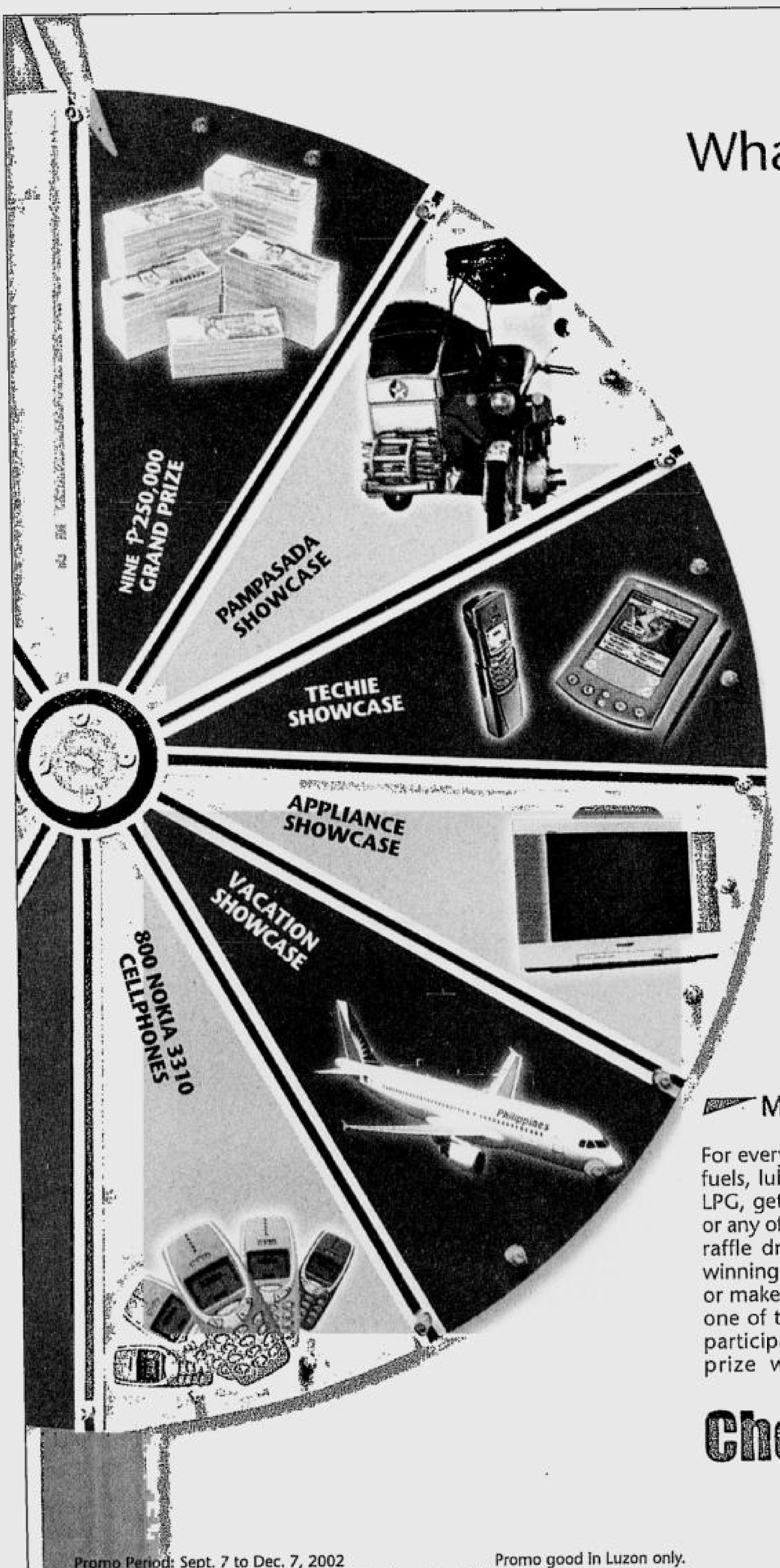
Zapanta said the only major threat to PAL's P1-billion profit target was the growing Middle East tensions, specifically the US' war plans against Iraq. "The current speculation has already raised world fuel prices, a major cost factor in our operations."

If PAL's fortunes do not change in the next five months (the airlines' peak season), Zapanta said the airline was well on its way from reversing last fiscal year's P1.5-billion loss (fiscal year ending March 2002) and recovering fully from the 9-11 attacks in the United States.

PAL's poor performance in the last fiscal year snapped the airline's profits of P466.5 million in 2001 and P48.5 million in 2000—its first back-to-back year in the black following six consecutive years of losses. "We're really hoping that PAL would continue to sustain its profitability despite the turbulent period," Zapanta said.

Zapanta said PAL's 10-year rehabilitation program, which began in June 1998, has so far been working well as it has been up to date with its debt payments. He said PAL, with its profitability, was considering to pay ahead of schedule part of its obligations to foreign creditors to generate more savings on interest costs.

Zapanta said PAL remained cautious on expanding its international routes as it has chosen to strike alliances with major airlines in Europe first before resuming flights to the region. *Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.*



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What Drives You
CALTEX

PLDT posts 75% surge in 9-month profit to ₱4.2B

By Abigail L. Ho

TELECOM giant Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT) yesterday reported a 75-percent jump in net profit for the first nine months of the year, driven by strong growth in its wireless subsidiary.

From January to September, PLDT said its net income on a consolidated basis reached P4.2 billion against P2.38 billion a year ago.

For the third quarter, PLDT had a consolidated net income of P1.4 billion, which analysts said was within estimates and put it on track to achieve its estimated income for the full year.

"The company's solid performance during the first nine months of 2002, coupled with the completion of our liability management program, confirm that the fundamentals of our business are strong, and our outlook moving forward remains positive," Manuel Pangilinan, president and CEO of PLDT, said in a statement.

Analysts had expected earnings to rise year-on-year, driven by robust revenues from its cellular unit, Smart Communication Inc.

But they were also worried a slowdown in new subscribers and an ownership row would overshadow the results.

In early June, First Pacific Co. Ltd., the Hong Kong conglomerate controlled by Indonesia's Salim family, said it was seeking to sell its controlling 24.4-percent stake in PLDT to the Gokongwei family, which owns a rival telecom firm.

The deal fell through at the end of September after management officials blocked it, arguing it was not in the best interest of all shareholders.

"Notwithstanding the uncertainties the company faces at the shareholder level, our strong performance should dispel any doubt that we are distracted from our priorities or our focus," Pangilinan said.

Management's commitment toward meeting our targets, maintaining our leadership position in all our lines of business, and delivering the best service to our customers remains as firm as ever," Pangilinan added.

Smart, which is expected to pay cash dividends to PLDT in December this year, posted a 36-percent increase in its net income to P3.8 billion in the January-September period. Revenues for the period rose around 51 percent to P23.7 billion.

In the three months to September, Smart had net new subscribers of about 650,000, up sharply from 243,000 in the previous quarter.

Analysts attributed the growth to the launch of a new prepaid text card during the quarter. Short messaging is wildly popular in the country.

The wireless giant remained at the cellular market's No. 1 spot with an end-September subscriber base of almost 8 million, which included the analog and global system for mobile communications (GSM) subscribers of sister firm Pilipino Telephone Corp.

Smart alone had a GSM subscriber base of 5.9 million at the end of the first nine months of the year, from only 4 million in the same period last year. With these numbers, Smart now held 44 percent of the country's wireless pie.

The cellular service provider was also able to pare down its capital expenditures to only P5.4 billion as of end-September, putting it on track to meet its 2002 capex target of P9 billion.

The 2002 capex target represented a P10-billion reduction in spending from last year's P19 billion.

PLDT, which faces $1.3 billion worth of debt maturing between 2002 and 2004, said it was able to reduce its total debts by $82 million over the nine-month period, as free cash flows for the company continued to improve and were used to pay down debt.

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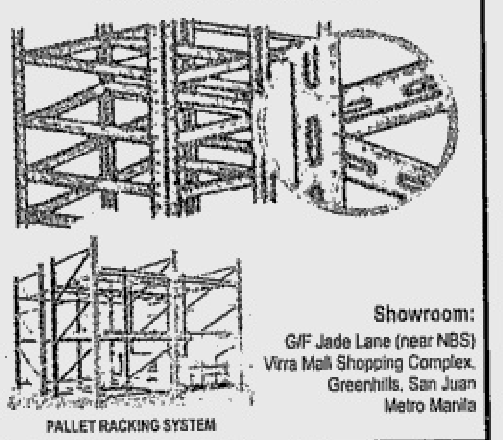

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(Sgd.) **Mr. NORBERTO A. SAN MATEO**
City Treasurer

Piltel cuts losses to ₱2.9B in first 9 months of 2002

CELLULAR service provider Pilipino Telephone Corp., a subsidiary of industry leader Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., yesterday announced "slightly higher" revenues of P2.5 billion in the first nine months of the year from year-ago earnings of P2.4 billion.

Revenues of its global system for mobile communications (GSM) brand, Talk 'N Text, grew by 67 percent to almost P1.8 billion as of end-September from last year's a little more than P1 billion.

Talk 'N Text now accounted for 73 percent of Piltel's total revenues, with its subscriber base of almost 1.7 million at the end of three quarters. Its end-September subscriber base expanded by 51 percent from last year's 1.1 billion subscribers, making it the country's No. 3 wireless operator.

Aside from its GSM clients, Piltel also has 83,253 analog/CDMA customers and 68,115 landline subscribers as of end-September.

Total cellular revenues grew by 11 percent to P1.9 billion from P1.7 billion last year.

Piltel posted a net loss of almost P2.9 billion at the end of three quarters, a significant improvement from last year's more than P19 billion.

This came as a result of lower operating costs, depreciation, marketing expenses and rent.

Operating costs went down by 21 percent to P4.7 billion from P5.9 billion, with more efficient spending and the shutdown of the company's paging operations in March.

"The reduction in our operating loss as a result of decreased operating expenses demonstrates our commitment to make Piltel a viable business anchored on our growing GSM prepaid business. Hopefully, we can continue on this track and achieve our goals to further reduce our losses and be cash break-even after servicing our financing costs for the year 2002," Piltel president Napoleon Nazareno said in a statement yesterday.

Depreciation costs likewise decreased by 22 percent to P2.2 billion in the first nine months of the year from P2.8 billion in the same period last year, mainly as a result of the partial writedown of the company's analog/CDMA assets taken in June 2001 and the write-off of the paging network and various corporate data network assets in December 2001.

October...

From page B1

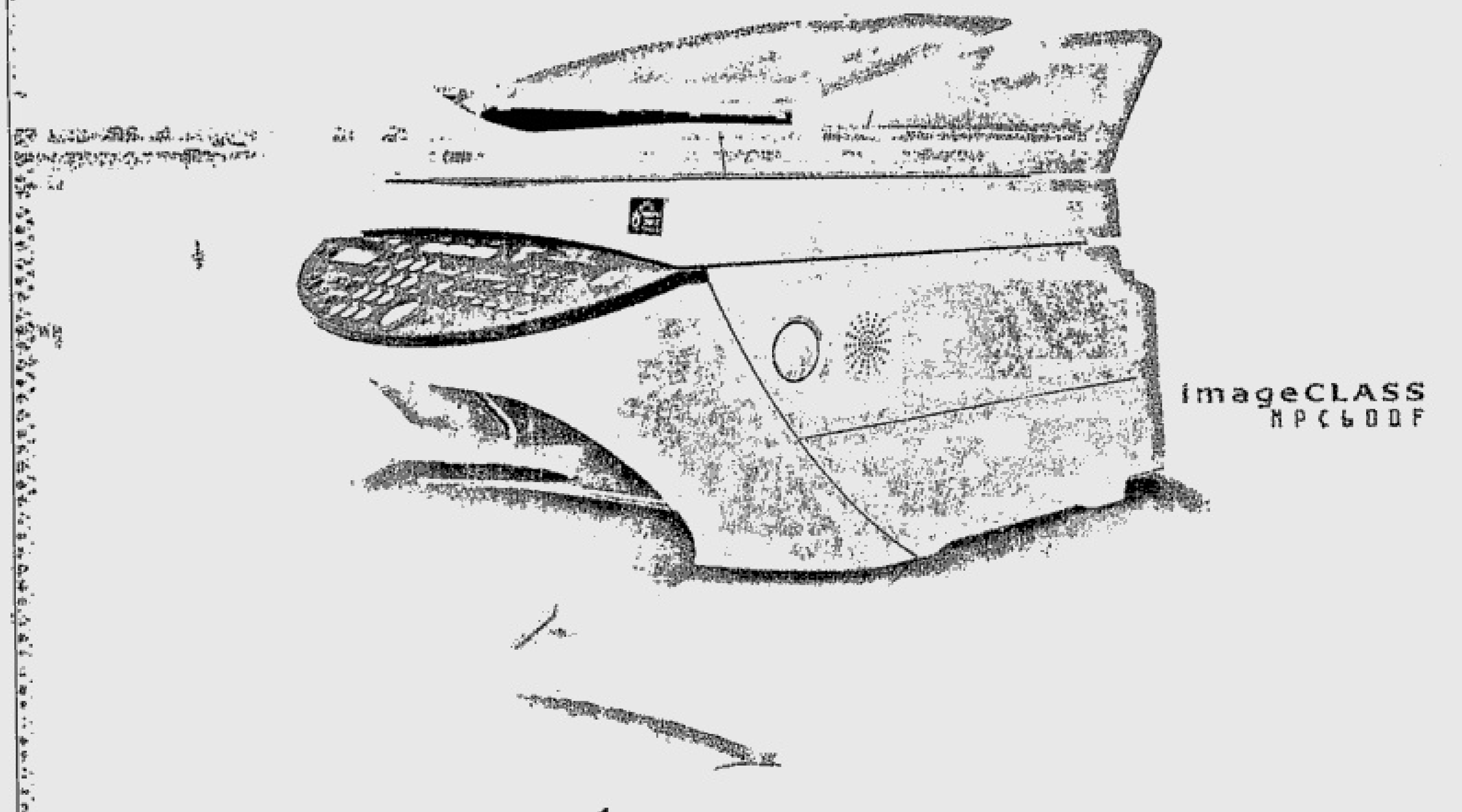
the world market are now trading at higher levels amid threats of a preemptive attack on Iraq by the United States.

Another risk factor being cited was the projected recurrence of the El Niño dryspell in the fourth quarter that could last until the middle of 2003.

Also a factor to watch, according to the Bangko Sentral's Buenaventura, was the possible increase in wages this month.

Workers' groups are petitioning for a P125 per day increase in wages across-the-board on the current minimum daily wage of P233 in the national capital region and P234 on the average nationwide.

Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin had cautioned the government against granting an excessive across-the-board wage increase as it would tend to push consumer prices up and clip the competitiveness of domestic industries.



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COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

INSTEAD of another Filipino, Nestlé, the world's largest food company, is appointing a Spanish executive to replace chair/president Juan B. Santos in April, according to the grapevine.

The Spanish executive, Salvador Pigem, has been in the country since the late '90s, originally assigned by the Vevey headquarters to oversee the Magnolia operations.

Santos, the first Filipino to assume CEO position in Nestlé Philippines, had been due to retire last year but the Swiss head office decided to extend his term, given the impressive sales/productivity growth in the Philippine operations and the country becoming the regional manufacturing supplier of Milo, Nescafe and other key Nestlé products.

Hopes for another Filipino to succeed Santos had been dashed much earlier after a key Filipino executive, said to be the heir-apparent, left the local Nestlé over allegations of advertising and marketing irregularities.

The retirement of Santos, who also sits as a Malacañang board nominee in San Miguel Corp., had already been announced in an internal memorandum to key Nestlé Philippines executives. Nestlé Philippines has yet to make a public announcement, choosing a no-comment stance after a brief item appeared in this column on Friday.

COCKTALES/ B4

RJ & FRIENDS ARE MOVING THEIR WEEKLY FRIDAY PERFORMANCES TO THE CAPTAIN'S BAR MANDARIN HOTEL STARTING NOV. 8. RJ's Friends such as the Poni-debs, Joe Mari Chan, The Lollipops, PMA Class '69, Archie Lacson & The Dancetime with Chito Dancers, the Hotdog Band, John Lesaca, Margie Dela Rama, Marvi Cojuangco Yulo, Chona Mercado and Becca Jose and other guest celebrities are lined up for November and December. There is a first drink consummable charge of P 300. Fun starts at 9pm. Call for reservations at 750-8888.

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CONFERENCE PROGRAM & SCHEDULE

DAY ONE, November 20

E-Government Track
9:00am-12:00nn, *Moderator: Janette C. Toral*

- State of E-Commerce Compliance by Philippine Government Agencies - by Undersecretary Gregory Domingo, Dept. of Trade & Industry
- E-Government Budget Allotment - by Undersecretary Mario Relampagos, Dept. of Budget & Management
- E-Banking and E-Payments by Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas
- E-Commerce Project Standards by Julie Ana Sudario, Director, National Computer Center
- RP-Web Update by Secretary Leandro Mendoza, Dept. of Transportation & Communication
- Use of VAS in E-Government by Armi Jane R. Borje, Deputy Commissioner - OIC, National Telecommunications Commission
- Audit Initiatives and Issues by Arcadio Cuenco, Director, Commission on Audit

Wireless Track
1:30-5:00pm, *Moderator: Ruel S. Kapunan*

- The State of Wireless Technology - MMS, The Next Big Thing in Wireless by Globe Telecom Inc.
- Surviving the Advertising Slump Through Wireless Technologies by Manuel P. Quiogue, President, GMA 7 Network
- Location-Based Services & Telematics by J. Xavier Gonzalez, President, Findme.com
- Mobile Commerce: How Wireless Technology Makes Business (TBA)

DAY TWO, November 21

E-Commerce Track
9:00am-12:00nn, *Moderator: Guillermo M. Luz*

- Philippine Internet Users Survey and the Potential of E-Commerce by Elena van Tooren, Director, AC Nielsen
- Electronic Cash Management:Creating Value for Your Business in the Digital Age by Marita Socorro Gayares, Vice-President, Bank of the Philippine Islands
- Interactive Online Banking by Johan Sekora, Manager, HSBC
- Best Practices in Doing E-Commerce by Ramon Garcia, President, e-2-door.com, TG Limcaoco, President, MyAyala.com and Edna Belleza, Vice President, Sales & Linkages, Inq7.net

Internet & Web Technology Track
1:30-5:00pm, *Moderator: Jack Madrid*

- Best Practices in E-Commerce Project Management by David Paraiso Jr., Director, US-based Integrated Technologies Inc.
- Implementing Logistics: A Case Study by Santi Araneta, President, e-LBC
- Web Technology and Services - Microsoft.NET by Jojo Ayson, Microsoft Philippines
- Hewlett Packard Presentation

DAY THREE, November 22

Outsourcing Track
9:00am-12:00nn, *Moderator: Lito Reyes*

- The Philippine Software Development Outsourcing Industry: A Self-Assessment - by Marife Zamora, President, Headstrong
- 2003 Global Forecast for IT Services Outsourcing Market (TBA)
- Global Market Oportunities in Outsources Software Development Business - by Ken Saito, Commercial Attache, Embassy of Japan, Henry Schumacher, Executive Vice-President, ECCP, and David Paraiso Jr., US-based Integrated Technologies Inc.

Policies Track
1:30-4:00pm, *Moderator: Atty. JJ Disini*

- Convergence Bill
- Optical Media Bill
- Terrorism Bill
- Cyber Crime Bill

by Rep. Imee Marcos, Albert dela Cruz, Atty. Ferdinand Negre* and Rodolfo Salalima

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RCBC shelves plan to issue ₱3.6-B tier-two borrowings

By Clarissa S. Batino

RIZAL Commercial Banking Corp. has shelved indefinitely its plan to issue P3.6 billion worth of 10-year tier-two notes this year as its officials realized that such a capital-raising exercise would be more costly for the bank.

RCBC vice chair Cesar Virata yesterday said the bank had put the issuance of long-term bonds on hold. Tier-two notes are borrowings that investors could convert into equity upon maturity.

"We have shelved the plan indefinitely because it is an expensive way of raising capital. The Philippine market is not very receptive so we will just delay it," said Virata.

The Yuchengco-controlled bank had planned to float P2 billion and $30 million worth of tier-two notes.

"I think we won't be able to make money if the cost of capital will be very high. If a bank's lending rate is 9 percent and the rate on capital, for instance, is 10 percent, how can we make money," Virata noted.

As opposed to the position of RCBC, the Metrobank Group is set to issue another $100 million in tier-two notes. Metrobank is the first and so far, the only bank that tapped long-term borrowings to shore up its capital base.

"Metrobank said it is looking at tier-two again to support its expansion and improve its branch network," said BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura.

Metrobank issued its first tier-two notes in December 2001. The bank sold $100 million of five-year convertible debt notes to Singapore-based Dunmore Asset Ltd. The bank said it used the money to buy dollar-denominated sovereign bonds.

Buenaventura said even if Metrobank would use the proceeds of a tier-two float to invest in other debt instruments, the issuance of convertible papers would still improve its capital adequacy ratio.

Equitable PCI Bank said it would issue P10 billion worth of tier-two bonds this year.

The central bank has been encouraging local banks to tap tier-two capital in lieu of a straight equity investment to help improve their balance sheets.

A tier-two capital is also referred to as subordinated debt. It is an investment similar to a deposit because it earns a pre-determined rate.

Banks, said the central bank chief, needed fresh capital to enable them to recover from the adverse impact on their financial position of their huge non-performing loans.

The BSP has also been pushing banks to merge and consolidate, with an end in view of having fewer but stronger financial groups.

SEC revokes licenses of 2 firms owned by 'Marcos kin'

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission has revoked the corporate licenses of East Pacific AAA Foundation Inc. and West Pacific AAA Foundation Inc. for misrepresentation and for duping the general public.

The foundations had claimed that they were administrators and recipients of the Marcos gold and other properties. They were found luring the investing public into becoming members by paying only P75 each, which will enable them to benefit from the Marcos millions by receiving P500,000 in their ATM accounts, free hospitalization, free education and participation in livelihood projects.

The leader of the two foundations, Alvin Alvincent Almirante whose real name is Alvincent Gooc Bersales, had claimed to be the real Bong Bong Marcos.

Former associates of Almirante, Rose Marie Go and Renato Llamado, gave the SEC pieces of evidence linking the fraudulent activities directly to the two foundations and Almirante himself.

Go, for her part, said that the financial statements submitted to the SEC were fake and the alleged billions of dollars in accounts abroad were all a sham.

"Considering further that there is no money to expect from the respondents, the obvious and reasonable conclusion one would have is that the people who joined the respondent foundations have been duped/prejudiced in waiting for a piece of the pie that never was," the SEC said in its order revoking the licenses of the two foundations.

The SEC also noted that the name Alvin Alvincente Almirante, an alias of Bersales, was used and signed in the incorporation papers of the foundations in contravention of the law regulating the use of aliases. *Elena R. Torrijos*

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Baguio Country Club	Please Call	680,000
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Calatagan Golf Club "B"	-	110,000
Camp John Hay	-	250,000
Canlubang	450,000	550,000
Canyonwoods	-	180,000
Capitol Hills	-	110,000
Celebrity Sports Club	180,000	210,000
Eagle Ridge "A"/"B"/"C"	Please Call	Please Call
Eastridge "A"	-	105,000
Evercrest "A"	-	100,000
Forest Hills "A"	180,000	210,000
Forest Hills "B"	-	280,000
Forest Hills "C"	-	260,000
Makati Sports Club "A"	225,000	260,000
Makati Sports Club "B"	-	280,000
Manila Golf (Corporate)	Please Call	12,550,000
Manila Golf (Individual)	10,000,000	Please Call
Manila Polo	2,600,000	Please Call
Manila Southwoods "A"	Please Call	600,000
Manila Southwoods "B"	Please Call	700,000
Manila Yacht Club	-	Please Call
Metropolitan Club "A"	-	130,000
Metropolitan Club "B"	-	150,000
Mimosa (Individual)	-	120,000
Montemar (Individual)	-	35,000
Mt. Malarayat (Individual)	Please Call	330,000
Orchard Golf Club "A"/"B"/"C"	Please Call	Please Call
Puerto Azul	-	100,000
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Riviera Golf & Country Club "A"	-	Please Call
Rockwell	320,000	450,000
Sherwood Hills "A"	-	90,000
Sta. Elena "A"	1,400,000	1,625,000
Sta. Elena "B"	-	1,900,000
Subic Bay Yacht (Corporate)	-	280,000
Subic Bay Yacht (Individual)	-	170,000
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SEC inclined to revise rules on additional listings

By Elena R. Torrijios

THE PHILIPPINE Stock Exchange is considering amending its controversial Rule on Additional Listing of Securities to address concerns over the rule's applicability.

The revisions or the likely inclusion of new provisions in the rules were also aimed at encouraging more investments in companies with small capitalization, a PSE official said.

In a letter to the Securities and Exchange Commission, the PSE said it was looking at including in the rule a provision that would require a listed company to conduct a rights offering for the minority shareholders notwithstanding the existence of a provision in its articles of incorporation denying shareholders of preemptive rights.

A PSE official said the exchange wanted to remove the "price test" from the rule and to leave it up to the stockholders, particularly the minority, to decide whether they are willing to lose some of their holdings in cases of dilution.

At present, the PSE Rule on Additional Listing requires preemptive rights offering whenever new shares of a corporation are being sold to a third party at a discount of at least 10 percent of the prevailing market price.

The PSE wants the rights offering requirement waived by a vote of most of the minority shareholders in a meeting held for that purpose or if the transaction price is at a premium over the market price of the share.

The PSE also seeks the inclusion of a provision requiring the approval of the rights offering by the listed company's stockholders even if the said company's articles of incorporation provide for the denial of preemptive rights.

"The approval by the stockholders of transactions under the rule is being sought in order to safeguard the interests of the stockholders who may suffer from the transaction's dilutive effects and to assure that all transactions bear the imprimatur of such approval," PSE senior vice president Jose Cervantes said in his letter to the SEC. In the same letter, Cervantes also sought clarification of the exchange's proposed plans.

The exchange also wants to bring back an old rule allowing the listing of partially paid shares.

ALI's planned ₱1-B STCP float obtains favorable rating

PHILIPPINE Rating Services Corp., an affiliate of Standard & Poor's, yesterday said it had given Ayala Land Inc.'s proposed P1-billion short-term commercial paper float the highest possible rating of PRS 1.

"PRS 1 rating means that ALI has the strongest capability to pay the STCP issue, both interest and principal, on time. Repayment capacity is evidenced by: a leading market position, conservative capitalization structure, broad margins in earnings coverage of fixed financial charges, high internal cash generation, and established sources of alternate liquidity," Philratings said in a statement yesterday.

The rating agency noted that ALI's substantial portfolio of rental properties and a strong brand equity supporting sales of development properties reinforce expectations of stable profitability and cash flow generation despite the inherent volatility of the property development sector.

"Its management's strategy of enhancing its sources of stable income streams, its prudent approach in development activities, judicious use of debt, and initiatives to control costs and improve asset utilization all contribute to an expectation of ALI's strong credit measures being sustained going forward," Philratings pointed out.

In documents filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission last week, ALI said it would use an estimated P995 million in net proceeds from the STCP issue for general corporate purposes, including debt payments and working capital requirements.

ALI is the property arm of Ayala Corp., the publicly listed flagship holding company of the Ayala family. The company has budgeted P4.2 billion in capital expenditures this year, of which P1.2 billion had already been disbursed in the first half. *Elena R. Torrijos*

Cocktales

From page B3

Santos' replacement by a Spanish executive comes at a time of renewed militancy from Nestlé's left-wing Kilusang Mayo Uno union amid a regional economic slowdown.

Given Señor Pigem's reputed management wonders and strict regimen during his Magnolia days, the KMU can expect (finally?) bruising days ahead.

½ Cinderella, ½ Rustan's

CINDERELLA's floor area in the original Greenbelt has been reduced in half, with the boutique ceding the other half, the more valuable frontage, to what would become a Rustan's Express store.

The opening of a Rustan's grocery would attempt to fill a large void to Legaspi Village residents and office workers who have been left without a neighborhood supermarket ever since United was demolished to pave way for an expanded Greenbelt.

Across the old Greenbelt driveway, the now shuttered Via Mare Oyster Bar will also be renovated and resurrect as Shakey's, the American pizza parlor.

Like Cinderella, Via Mare would continue to occupy the rear end of its original lease, which continues to be the kitchen and backroom operations of the still open and popular Via Mare coffee shop.

Rocking Mandarin

NO wonder Mandarin GM Helmut Gaisberger was espied among the SRO crowd in one of the recent Friday rock-and-roll jam sessions at the Edsa Shangri-la.

Not only was the Mandarin's general manager trying to pick up marketing points on how to pack the premier Makati hotel on Friday nights, Gaisberger was also bent on pirating the entire show altogether.

Starting this Friday, Ramon "RJ" Jacinto and the new Riots will be performing at the Mandarin's Captain's Bar, with a dance floor set up, just like in the Edsa Shangri-la lobby, so the baby boomer crowd would have chance to strut their Mick Jagger-era legs and the socialites to practice their pilates.

And to ensure that their prices would not alienate the middle-class fans, Gaisberger also decided to keep the P300-minimum consumable formula that Edsa Shangri-la used to charge.

Heard through the grapevine

THE BOARD of the Philippine Basketball Association will meet late this afternoon to decide which outfit will have the exclusive rights to televise next season's PBA Games.

The government's NBN-4 and IBC-13 have decided to combine and bid as one, against the other remaining contender, the Choy Cojuangco-Joey Concepcion-Carlos "Bobong" Velez-Roberto Barreiro combine.

The PBA has 10 governors, representing the 10 basketball teams. Of the 10, San Miguel Corp. owns four, by virtue of its recent acquisitions, although the SMC votes have been limited to only two.

Lobbying and *gapangan* have been quite intense, as usual. *(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)*

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Tuesday, November 5, 2002)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	18.5	18.75	18.5	18.75	41,100
Bank of the Phil. Islands	42	42	41	41.5	496,800
China Banking Corp.	615	615	615	615	60
Citystate Savings Bank	14.25	14.25	14.25	14.25	2,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	26	26	25	25	272,600
First E-Bank Corp.	0.81	0.81	0.81	0.81	20,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	31	31	30.5	31	43,900
Security Bank Corp.	11.25	11.25	11.25	11.25	800
Union Bank of the Phil.	18.25	18.25	18.25	18.25	12,000
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	1	1	1	1	30,000
Filipino Fund Inc.	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	10,000
First Metro Invest. Corp.	209	209	209	209	130
Manulife Financial Corp.	1190	1200	1190	1200	1,520
Sun Life Financial Serv.	930	935	930	930	1,220
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	17	17	17	17	16,300
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.42	0.42	0.39	0.39	200,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	405	405	402.5	402.5	10,100
Piltel	0.2	0.205	0.2	0.2	1,210,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	230	230	227	227	117,190
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.01	0.01	0.0095	0.01	10,000,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	14.5	14.5	14.5	14.5	20,400
Manila Electric Co. B	20	20	19.75	20	214,600
Petron Corp.	1.44	1.48	1.44	1.48	574,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.86	0.86	0.86	0.86	200,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.22	1.22	1.22	1.22	15,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.16	2.16	2	2.16	469,000
William, Gothong & Aboitiz	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	6,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Union Cement Corp.	0.6	0.6	0.58	0.58	120,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.14	2.14	2.14	2.14	1,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	13.5	13.75	13.5	13.75	151,800
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	32	32.5	32	32.5	197,800
RFM Corp.	0.74	0.74	0.74	0.74	50,000
San Miguel Corp. A	57.5	57.5	57	57.5	64,600
San Miguel Corp. B	62	62.5	62	62	164,200
Universal Robina Corp.	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	6,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	60,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	4.75	4.75	4.7	4.7	5,805,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.3	2.32	2.3	2.32	121,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.005	0.005	0.005	0.005	7,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	2.48	2.48	2.48	2.48	5,000
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.105	0.105	0.105	0.105	300,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.195	0.2	0.195	0.2	960,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.055	0.055	0.055	0.055	100,000
Ebecom Holdings Inc.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	5,000
Fil-Estate Corp.	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	20,000
First Phil Hldgs. Corp.	13.5	13.5	13.5	13.5	218,700
Ionics Inc.	2.12	2.12	2.1	2.1	52,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.3	1.3	1.28	1.28	397,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.009	0.009	0.009	0.009	4,000,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	350,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.39	0.39	0.39	0.39	70,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.19	0.215	0.19	0.215	640,000
Music Corp.	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09	300,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	100,000
Seafront Resources Corp.	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	10,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	100,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Euro-Med Lab. Phil. Inc.	4.75	4.75	4.75	4.75	11,000
Interphil Labs Inc. A	1.64	1.74	1.64	1.74	709,000
Interphil Labs Inc. B	1.66	1.76	1.66	1.76	496,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	10.25	10.25	10	10	68,100
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.35	0.39	0.35	0.39	1,220,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	60,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	17	17.25	17	17.25	119,400
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5	5	4.95	4.95	5,089,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.145	0.145	210,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	0.86	0.87	0.86	0.87	510,000
SM Development Corp.	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	50,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	5.6	5.6	5.5	5.5	4,151,000
MINING					
Benguet Corp. A	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09	10,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	220,000
Omico Corp.	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	7,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	50,000
OIL					
Interport Res. B	0.0014	0.0014	0.0014	0.0014	1,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0024	0.0024	0.0024	0.0024	20,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	10,000

	SHARES	VALUE(P)
Bank & Fin Svc	931,930	33,019,670.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	37,145,127	98,829,678.00
PRO	10,010,000	48,579,450.00
Mining	7,280,000	66,300.00
OIL	21,010,000	51,000.00
GRAND TOTALS :	76,377,057	180,546,098.00
AVERAGES		
Bank & Fin Svc	406.24	DOWN 4.67
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,443.62	DOWN 2.59
PRO	465.61	DOWN 10.38
Mining	1,065.07	DOWN 51.57
OIL	1.33	UP 0.02
All Shares Index	625.24	UP 13.13
Composite	1,042.31	DOWN 8.67

NO. OF ADVANCES: 14; NO. OF DECLINES: 27; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 34; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 75; NO. OF TRADES: 1,074

DISCLOSURES

AYALA Land Inc. will hold its analysts' briefing on Nov. 11, 3:30 at the South Room, 25/F of Tower One Building, Makati City.

* * *

JOLLIBEE Foods Corp. will hold a company briefing for its 3rd quarter financial results on Nov. 12, 2 p.m. at the 32/F, Customer First Room of Jollibee Plaza Building, Pasig City. Also, the company confirmed the Securities and Exchange Commission penalized it for the late filing of its definitive information statement. But the company contested the allegation and requested for a reconsideration of the penalty. The SEC has yet to reply on the matter.

* * *

PHILIPPINE Estates Corp. has Equitable PCI Bank as its new stock transfer agent.

* * *

LA TONDEÑA Distillers Inc. has bought 122,568 of its own shares at P32 per share.

* * *

INTERPHIL Laboratories Inc. has bought 444,000 of its own shares at P1.60 per share and its 144,000 of its "B" shares at P1.609 per share.

Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research

Napocor plans to file new rate hike plea

By Ronnel W. Domingo

STATE firm National Power Corp. is expected to file within the month a new rate adjustment petition with the Energy Regulatory Commission, which had ordered the power firm to reduce its rates by 13 centavos per kilowatt-hour.

Napocor general counsel Ranier Butalid said in a statement that the new petition was being prepared after the Court of Appeals lifted a temporary restraining order on an ERC decision issued in September. The court order affirmed an ERC order in June requiring Napocor to unbundle or separate into different components its rates.

Aside from affirming the June order, the court decision also required Napocor to further reduce its rates by an average of 6 centavos per KWh.

"With the TRO already lifted, there is already a legal impetus to file a revised rate petition that would give Napocor the opportunity to update its figures," Butalid said.

The new petition will be based on 2002 costs, which Napocor hopes would enable it to implement "fair rate increases."

The Electric Power Industry Reform Act requires all power utilities, including Napocor, to unbundle their rates based on 2000 figures.

Napocor said the new rate hike petition, if approved, would allow it to operate reasonably and free the government of additional financial burden.

Last week, Napocor officials said the firm would incur a projected net loss of P70 billion in 2003 if the ERC order was implemented.

Money supply up 8.9% in Sept.

By Clarissa S. Batino

MONEY supply rose by 8.9 percent in September to P1.58 trillion from the previous year's level. It was also higher than the year-on-year growth of 7.7 percent a month ago.

The growth in domestic liquidity, an indicator of the inflation trend and used by monetary authorities to gauge whether there is a need to adjust policies, was attributed by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas to an increasing level of foreign capital in the system and the growing government borrowings.

A sudden uptick in domestic liquidity, however, indicates pressure on inflation while a slow growth means a slowdown in the economy.

The 8.9-percent growth in domestic liquidity in September was, however, slower than the BSP's expectations of an 11 percent increase this year.

Still, monetary authorities need not adjust its policy rates or the banks' reserve requirements to prop up money supply, said a Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas official.

The BSP said in a press statement that the growth in money supply could also be attributed to the rising dollar remittances of overseas Filipino workers.

"The foreign exchange purchases by banks from private non-bank sectors, mainly the OFWs, helped improve the level of net foreign assets in the system," said the central bank.

The level of credits extended to the national government grew by 7.7 percent compared with the level in September 2001 as the state sold treasury bills aggressively to finance a growing budget deficit.

This helped offset a 2.7-percent contraction in private sector credit in September although this was lower than the 3.9 percent a month ago.

"The strengthening of the demand for money during the period points to firmer domestic demand in recent months, which is expected to continue in the coming months as the holiday season approaches," said the BSP.

Leading indicators, according to the central bank, supported such expectations following a slight growth in the average capacity utilization of the manufacturing sector to 74.9 percent in August from 74.1 percent in July.

Energy sales of Manila Electric Co. also picked up in September, growing by 3.7 percent year-on-year from a 1.5-percent contraction a month ago.

Personal consumption remained robust as indicated by a 7.8 percent quarter-on-quarter and 33.5 percent year-on-year growth of credit card receivables.

RP suffering from investors misconception

From page B1

showed signs of petroleum reserves and seven are deemed potentially profitable. On the other hand, another seven wells turned out to be dry, while eight showed fuel reserves but not in commercial volumes.

"This is not well-known in the industry and it is partially our fault," Holopainen says. "We should be more aggressive in promoting our resources."

Game plan

The Philippine Petroleum Exploration Investment Promotion's game plan is to ride on the success of Malampaya, which has brought the Philippines in the league of major natural gas producers in the region.

Malampaya's gas reserves, estimated at 2.5 trillion to 3.4 trillion cubic feet, required some $2 billion to be extracted. This involved state-of-the-art technology to put up a production platform 80 km from mainland Palawan and well installations 820 meters below sea level through which gas flows from 3 km beneath the sea bed.

Also, a 504-km underwater pipeline was laid out to bring the gas to a processing plant in Batangas.

Also, the Malampaya consortium found an oil reservoir from where about 35 million barrels of crude was believed recoverable. During a test on whether the reserve was profitable or not, the consortium produced about 2 million barrels that it sold to a refinery in South Korea. Test results have yet to come in.

Holopainen believes the Malampaya experience will make those who think it's not worth investing in the Philippines think twice.

"They would step back and say, 'Why did (Royal Dutch/)Shell spend so much in the Philippines if there's nothing there? And why is Shell farming out in other exploration ventures if the area is not prospective?" he asks.

Reasons to go

The big question, of course, is why exploration firms should go to the Philippines.

"Aside from very good prospectivity, we actually have very good contract terms," he says. "The petroleum firms are assured a 40-percent share of net proceeds, plus cost recovery of up to 70 percent of gross proceeds for up to five years."

He adds that for successful ventures, investors' share of revenue goes up by 7.5 percent if a Filipino firm has a stake of 15 percent in the business. Income tax will also be paid out of the government's shares in the proceeds.

He says the perks that the Philippines offers come after only those of New Zealand, Australia, the United States and Thailand.

"Chances of success in Indonesia and Malaysia are higher than in the Philippines, but we may have better return-risk rates," he says.

Holopainen quotes data from the Bureau of Economic Analysis of the United States' Department of Commerce. Indonesia and Malaysia offer better return on investments at about 18 percent against the Philippines' 16 percent.

However, investors are exposed to 4-percent and 9-percent risks in Indonesia and Malaysia, respectively. They take risks of only 2 percent in the Philippines.

Holopainen says the incentives to exploration firms may already be some of the best in the world, but that the country still needed flexibility. For instance, better terms could be offered for investors in less prospective areas.

"We can do this because we have the Philpra data. The basins and the survey block in them are ranked according to (potential resources present) in them."

In terms of the licensing system, Holopainen says the Department of Energy is building a new strategy that will help effectively promote the resources.

"The current system depends on unsolicited applications-investors can go in on first-come, first-served basis," Holopainen says.

Prospects

Here, the experience is that when one company shows interest in a particular prospect, competitors are drawn in. Conversely, when nobody is interested in certain prospects, everybody is relaxed-no pressure, no rush.

"We plan to change this to a bidding-round system which most countries use," he says.

The Philpro team has identified particular prospects, contracts for which would be auctioned off to potential explorers. The approach is to highlight each prospect such that each one would catch the attention of investors.

"What we want is a disciplined approach. We identify certain prospects and promote them with the new data we have. It's as if we have a catalogue."

The team has actually started the process when it attended an industry conference in Stavangar, Norway, in August. This was the Offshore Northern Seas 2002 conference, where the Philpra data was first presented to international players.

In Norway, the Philpro team met representatives of major oil exploration firms like Royal Dutch/Shell, BP, TotalFinaElf, StatOil and Unocal.

"We got exposure to a market that is not necessarily looking closely at the Philippines but has a general interest in Asia," Holopainen says. "We had one-on-one meetings with investors, all of which we are following up."

After that, the Philpro team plans to be visible in industry gatherings to be held next year in the United States, Canada and Singapore.

One good find

Holopainen sees holding at least one bidding round for an exploration contract next year. He hopes to look back after a couple of years hence and be able to see that what began in Norway will result in a certain number of drilling projects.

"We have to send the message that the ones we are promoting are prospective, that there's a good chance of success and that that success will translate to future interest in drilling," he says. "We need one good find that will give us the momentum we need."

Will the Philippines eventually be self-sufficient?

Holopainen prefers to be cautious: "If we have a well that can pump 50,000 barrels a day, that will be a big thing. That's about 15 percent of our daily oil consumption of 330,000 barrels."

And if there's enough drilling activities, he thinks there's a fair chance that the Philippines can have several such wells. It's hard to promise, but it is conceivable that in a decade or so there will come a time when we are supplying majority of our oil needs, he says.

Marketing savvy

The same goes for natural gas, which is replacing part of the country's oil imports that account for power generation. The Malampaya project supplies power plants with a total generating capacity of 2,700 megawatts--about 30 percent of the country's electricity needs.

Natural gas can cut a bigger slice of oil imports once a significant number of vehicles convert from diesel.

"This is more of an indigenous fuel in the sense that the most economically sensible market is the local one," Holopainen says. "And the more natural gas we find, the more we will use, the more prices would go down."

In case of any oil finds, Holopainen says it does not matter whether this can be refined locally. If not, the Philippines can export it like the Malampaya oil--the corresponding amount of finished product that the country imports is essentially still its own oil.

The impact is not only on supply concerns, but also on foreign exchange rate since a local oil source will help stabilize the peso in terms of significant changes in oil prices as the country is having now.

All these because the Philippines has a better picture of what the bowels of the earth can offer. What would happen next depends on marketing savvy.

Confidence is not lacking as the Philpro team members are the greatest believers of what they have found out.

"We can do a lot of things and it's great for the country. We understand the important of doing this right, and now we have a chance."

When you hear that from a man named Holopainen, you can almost smell hydrocarbon.

Rice yield up 1.2%

THE GOVERNMENT yesterday said it was expecting the 2002 paddy rice output to reach a record high of 13.11 million tons, up 1.2 percent or about 160,000 tons from last year due to good fourth quarter harvest.

The Philippines, one of Asia's largest rice buyers, produced a record 12.95 million tons of paddy in 2001.

"This is the first in our history that palay (paddy) production will hit the 13-million ton mark, and it will be made despite the prolonged dry spell that affected wide rice-growing areas of the country during the third quarter," Agriculture Secretary Leonardo Montemayor told a news conference.

He said that due to good southwest monsoon rains and the government's planting scheme, fourth quarter output in 2002 is expected to rise by 8.9 percent to 5.42 million tons from a year ago. *Reuters*

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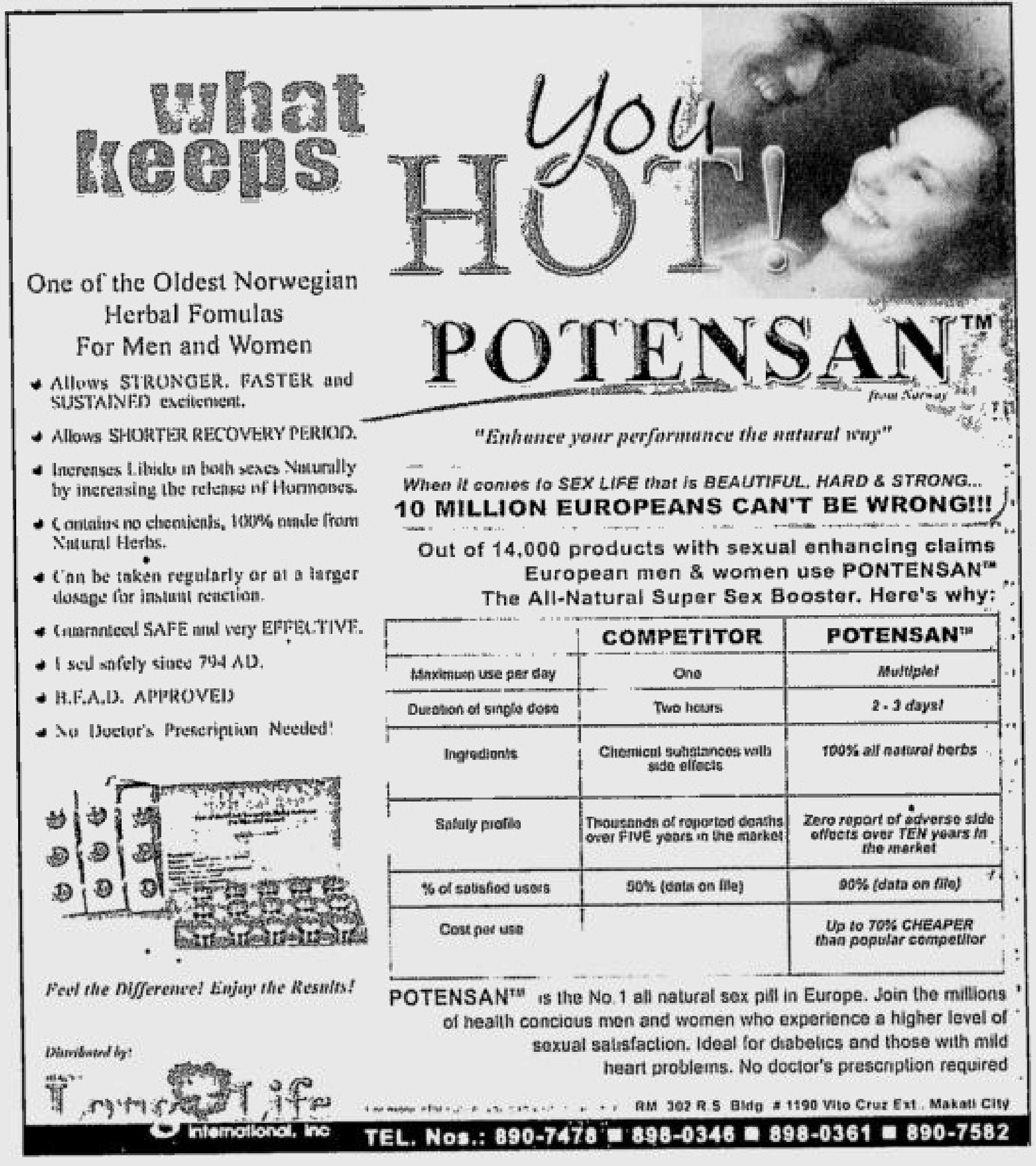
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NOVEMBER 9 (SAT.)
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Aries Espinosa, Editor

GMA cites IIR Exhibitions

PRESIDENT Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo recently cited IIR Exhibitions Philippines Inc. (IIR) for spearheading the holding of international trade exhibitions in the country that has contributed greatly to propelling the Philippines into a high-tech industrial economy.

Ms Macapagal said IIR's initiative in spearheading these events enables local and foreign business leaders to provide the local market with the latest technology and trends in the automotive, hardware, metal and woodworking industries and its collective effort to promote trade is truly beneficial and commendable.

IIR is behind the holding from Nov. 6 to 9 at the World Trade Center Metro Manila of Philtronics 2002, the 9th Philippine International Electronics Manufacturing Technology Exhibition and Conference back-to-back with Enviro-Tech Philippines 2002, the 2nd Total Environment Technology and Product Showcase incorporating Instrumentation and Controls Philippines and Pumps and Valves Philippines and Autoshop Asia 2002, 3rd International Automotive and Motorcycle, Aftermarket Parts and Accessories, Garage, Refinishing and Workshop Equipment and Tools Exhibition.

Ms Macapagal cited IIR's dynamic role in stimulating economic activities as consistent with the government's commitment to its goal of equitable development and economic stability. The cooperation that these events engender, Arroyo said, provides the synergy to create a vibrant business environment.

"I am grateful for private sector initiatives such as these international exhibitions for reinforcing our national goals and policies to move forward. I therefore call on all key players of the industry to accelerate its development, to help us reshape the social landscape and to push national growth in this era of globalization," she said.

The IIR Group worldwide currently organizes trade events in the United States, United Kingdom, France, Poland, Germany, Netherlands, Hong Kong, UAE, Egypt, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and the Philippines. In the Philippines, IIR through its trade exhibitions have been a force that have significantly moved the economy of the country with the tremendous volume of technology that have been transferred from many countries to the local industries. The value of sales of these technologies, equipment and other supplies and materials from these exhibitions has been valued at more than $500 million.

For more information, call IIR at 750-8588.

DLSU-CSB GRADUATES 1ST BATCH

The De La Salle University-College of Saint Benilde, in partnership with the Philippine Association of National Advertisers (Pana), conducted its first commencement exercises for the first batch of DLSU-CSB-Post Baccalaureate Diploma Program in Marketing Communications Management at the Ballroom of DLSU-CSB International Conference Center recently. Batch 2002 graduated 18 marketing professionals. Shown with the graduates are (last row, from left) Pana board secretary Susie Achacoso-Cruz, president Gigi B. Rodriguez, executive director Dr. Nonie S. Azarcon, DLSU vice president for academics Dr. Rose Marie Salazar-Clemena, course facilitator Herbert Sancianco, DLSU-CSB director for certificate program Robert Robang, Pana vice president Jun Alcantara and director Atoy Babasa.

SWI Binondo's 14th birthday with a twist

ON SEPT. 20, Slimmers World Binondo celebrated its 14th anniversary. Instead of doing the motorcade the traditional way by using motor vehicles to show off the great bodies of the center, it did so by using kalesas to parade on the streets of Binondo.

Sponsors who supported the event were ABS-CBN Publishing, Manly Sports Wear, Dep & Fa, Nu Salt and Butter Buds, Blue Skies Crackers, Conjac Jelly, Bausch and Lomb, Aeromed, Magnolia Ice Cream, Maggi Cup Sarap, Carica, Power Bar, Panchakee, and Godiva.

Pfizer also conducted free medical check-ups and ECGs during the event.

Slimmers World International is the ultimate in fitness and slimming. Call Slimmers World Binondo at 244-1811 and 242-2330.

Cable Convention: a new beginning

THE 11th annual international meet of the Philippine Cable TV industry has been set for April 9 to 11, 2003. Organized by the Philippine Cable Television Association (PCTA), this year's gathering has been designed to help re-energize the industry that, in recent years, has been faced with great challenges. Inspired by the theme "Forging 1 Future", it will be a chance for all industry players to face these challenges as a unified force.

To help underscore this new emphasis on cooperation, the PCTA decided to rename the gathering Cable Convention. Overall convention chair Antonio V. Selda explained the change of name: "In contrast to our traditional Cable Show, the 11th Philippine International Cable Convention will be a conscious effort at inviting players to convene, to come together for a concerted effort at strengthening the industry."

PCTA president J. Manuel Z. Dabao added, "The 11th Cable Convention will be a great opportunity for cable operators, program suppliers, as well as equipment suppliers to combine their strengths and work out ways to fast-track the progress of the industry. More than ever, cooperation is required of everyone when the industry is facing enormous challenges, including a sluggish economy, a weakened market, and signal piracy.

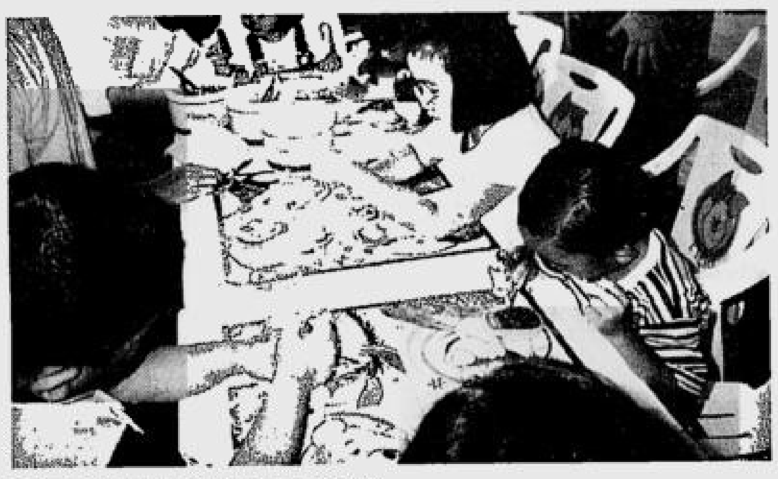
"I am confident that by working together, the growth of our industry will surely be hastened."

The three-day event will be held at the Edsa Shangri-La Manila. It will feature plenary talks on the various aspects of cable TV operation and new technology for industry expansion. Expected to participate are international cable program and equipment suppliers and delegates from cable operators throughout the country. For more information, call the PCTA secretariat at 638-8541 to 42/44, or log on to www.pcta.org.ph.

Thai training, study visit

THE PHILIPPINE Society of Librarians and Information Specialists (PSLIS) will have a Training and Study Visit in Thailand on Dec. 1 to 7. This training aims to observe, experience, and discover the IT impact on libraries and information centers.

Invited to participate are librarians, teachers, records personnel, and interested professionals in related fields. For inquiries, call Lynn at 724-1994, Lily at 929-2180, Joven at 527-9672, Beth at 932-1295 and Ida at 891-0307.



POOH FRIENDSHIP DAY

The world's most lovable and huggable bear, Winnie the Pooh, together with his whimsical friends from the Hundred Acre Woods, once more brought some sparkle of their amity here in the Philippines during the Pooh Friendship Day at Ayala Center Cebu Sept. 13 to 15, at Alabang Town Center Sept. 20-22, and Ayala Center Makati Sept. 26 to 29. Goldilocks took part in the celebration, as it displayed variations of Pooh and Friends birthday cakes: Sweet Little Piglet, Tigger Power, Funny Old Eeyore, My Best Friend Pooh, Pooh and Piglet and Pooh and Bear Smiles. Fun-filled activities like Color my Cookie and Cupcake Decorating were facilitated by Goldilocks.

BITS & Clips

Kolin's latest air-con

KOLIN Home Appliances presents its latest line of window-type air-conditioners, the e-Series. Equipped with high-tech features for convenience (24-hour on/off timer, full remote control with LCD display, auto mode, and cool mode), for energy saving (high energy efficient ratios, sleep mode, and dry mode), and an anti-corrosion treated evaporator, this budget-friendly air-con gives you what you want at a more affordable price. The e-Series Air-conditioners are efficient, economical, and expedient. Kolin also offers other quality home appliances, such as televisions, refrigerators, electric fans, and small appliances. For more details, inquire at the Kolin Showroom, ground floor of the Kolin Building, Edsa corner Magallanes Avenue, Makati City, or call 852-1531 to 37. Visit any appliance dealer nationwide. Log on to www.kolinphil.com.ph.

AIA-HINOKI NEW COSMEDIC CENTER

In an effort to strengthen its presence and serve its growing number of customers outside Metro Manila, Aia-Hinoki Clinical Inc. has been opening cosmedic centers in key areas in Luzon. Among the new sites of its cosmedic centers is Batangas City where top officials of the company graced the formal opening ceremonies. Shown cutting the ceremonial ribbon is Sumiko Koizumi, board chair, with Neri F. Buenconsejo, executive vice president, while Teddy B. Gutierrez, president looks on at the back.

UNILAB HR VP PMAP MANAGER OF 2002

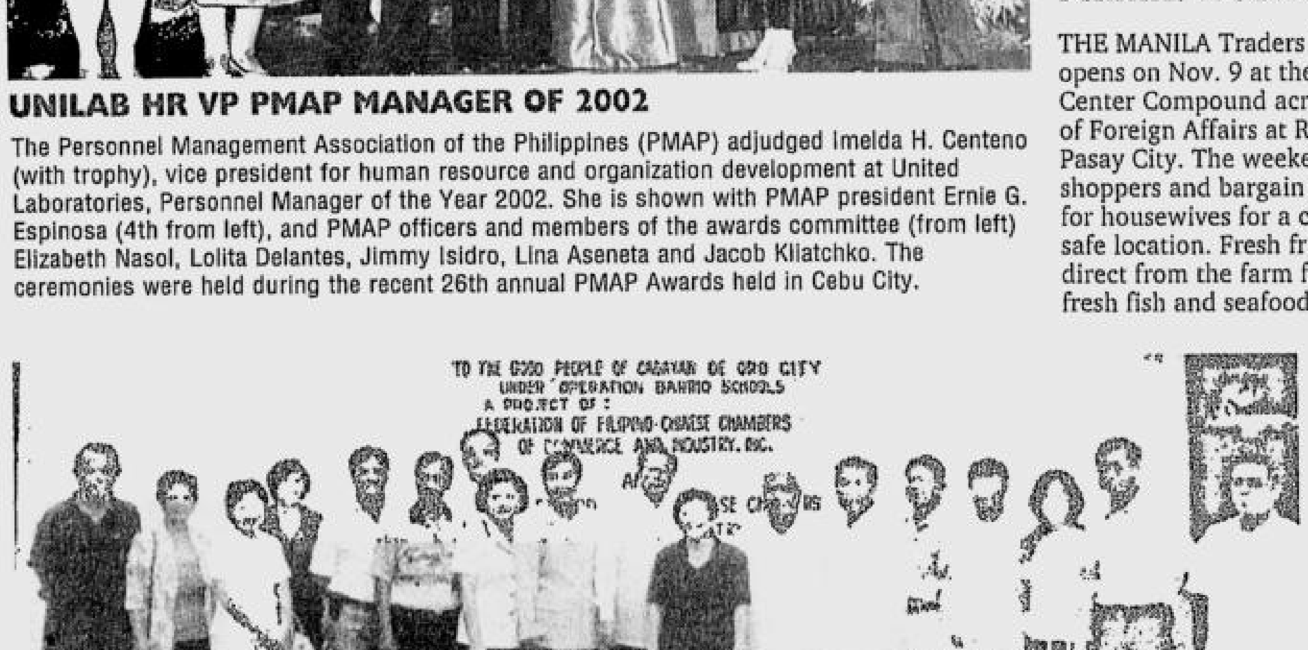
The Personnel Management Association of the Philippines (PMAP) adjudged Imelda H. Centeno (with trophy), vice president for human resource and organization development at United Laboratories, Personnel Manager of the Year 2002. She is shown with PMAP president Ernie G. Espinosa (4th from left), and PMAP officers and members of the awards committee (from left) Elizabeth Nasol, Lolita Delantes, Jimmy Isidro, Lina Aseneta and Jacob Kliatchko. The ceremonies were held during the recent 26th annual PMAP Awards held in Cebu City.

DLSU-D CPA review sched

THE DE La Salle University-Dasmarinas CPA Review Center announces the start of its review classes on Nov. 9. Classes are held every Saturdays and Sundays from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. For inquiries, call (046)416-4531 to 33 local 3035, (02)844-7832, or e-mail cbamce@dasma.dlsu.edu.ph or cbabnc@dasma.dlsu.edu.ph.

Manila weekend market

THE MANILA Traders Weekend Market opens on Nov. 9 at the Philippine Trade Center Compound across the Department of Foreign Affairs at Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City. The weekend market is for shoppers and bargain hunters, as well as for housewives for a convenient, clean and safe location. Fresh fruits and vegetables direct from the farm from Calabarzon, and fresh fish and seafood from Cavite and Laguna de Bay will be available. For inquiries, visit the site or call 410-1782, 925-7212, 925-7365, or 0917-8400026, 0916-3330983. The market offers a wide parking area for 200 cars and a well-planned floor plan for relaxed shopping. Sales marketing and promotion is being handled by Mikaria Enterprises led by GM Jojo Quinga, recently awarded by Philippine Media Research and Progress Report Inc. as outstanding businessman of the year.



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CLASSROOM BUILDING DONATION

A 2-classroom building was donated by Go Tong Foundation Inc to the people of Cagayan de Oro City through the Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FFCCCI). The classrooms are located at the Bulua Elementary School in Bulua, Cagayan de Oro City, Misamis Oriental. Shown after the turnover ceremony are Lily Go (4th from left) of Go Tong Foundation, Tirso Limbonhai and wife (10th and 11th from left), president of the Cagayan de Oro Federation of the FCCCI, and Bonifacio Lui (4th from right), vice chair of the welfare committee of the FFCCCI Manila. With them are school officials of Bulua Elementary School and other officers of Cagayan de Oro FFCCCI.

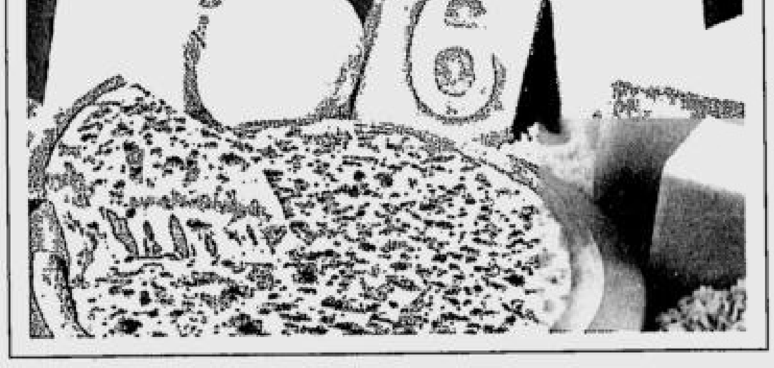
Product FILES

Pizza Hut's Ultimate Cheese

PIZZA Hut, the world's largest pizza restaurant, unveils its latest pizza offering, the Ultimate Cheese Pizza. Topped with a special six-cheese blend and sprinkled with zesty cheese herb seasonings, it is simply a delicious layer of 100-percent cheese that offers great flavors no other pizza restaurant will be able to duplicate.

To come up with this special flavor, Pizza Hut imported six kinds of cheese from around the world considered to be only the ultimate pizza toppings: Mozzarella, Provolone, Cheddar, Monterey Jack, Parmesan and Romano.

The Ultimate Cheese Pizza, another product of Pizza Hut's tradition of high quality and product innovation, is available on Pizza Hut's wide variety of crust types (Pan Pizza, Stuffed Crust, Cheesy Crust, Double Stuffed Crust, American Classic and The Edge) at all Pizza Hut restaurants nationwide.



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Let Sun Life Financial's top Mutual Fund Representatives for the 3rd quarter of 2002 guide you in choosing the right investment vehicle that suits your financial goals. So whether you're saving for your retirement, your child's education, or simply to enchance your wealth, trust these experts to help you achieve the results you want. Call 849-9999.

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Sales Teams

Osmanthus NBO
Headed by: Visitacion Lilia Chang (seated, fourth from right)

Tindalo NBO
Headed by: Winda Tan Gonzales (seated right)

Aspen NBO
Headed by: Antonio Sy (seated left)

Cypress NBO
Headed by: Nancy Baluyut (seated left)

Durian NBO
Headed by: Alfredo Sy (third from upper right)

Redwood NBO
Headed by: Mary Chan (seated middle)

Linden NBO
Headed by: Roberto Tan (seated left)

Acacia NBO
Headed by: Richard Young

Eucalyptus NBO
Headed by: Marita Abellera

Maple NBO
Headed by: Emilyn Chiu

Chestnut NBO
Headed by: Estella Ng

Cedar NBO
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Free trade talk little more than talk–for now

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia—Southeast Asian nations have pledged to establish a free trade zone with China, and they're talking about something similar with Japan and South Korea, but analysts caution their interests are so divergent that any deals won't come easily.

The 10 members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, ranging from highly developed Singapore to tiny, poor Laos, remain so fragmented that any meaningful package within the region seems elusive, experts say.

Their giant or wealthy neighbors to the north further complicates the picture.

"The bottom line here is there's too much overlap," said Song Seng Wun, a regional economist with GK Goh Research Pte. Ltd. in Singapore. "Though the pressure is on Asean to integrate, they probably won't be able to do it as much as has been played up."

Song predicted efforts to liberalize trade will enable business travelers and tourists to move more freely throughout the region.

But he thinks it will be hard to chip away at traditional rivalries and the protectionism for some industries within Asean members who compete with one another in a number of industries.

"I'm not sure exactly what they can come up with on free trade," Song said.

China's speedy ascendance as a regional power may have virtually forced Asean to agree on a framework for a free trade area, envisioned in the next decade, during a summit here on Monday.

Philippine Foreign Minister Blas Ople said Chinese Premier Zhu Rongji's "charm and logic" swayed the naysayers.

Asean members say they are also trying to move forward with Japan and South Korea, and some envision an eventual East Asia free trade area comprising all 13 nations.

But Cambodia's deputy information minister, Khieu Kanharith, acknowledged many sharp divides would have to be bridged.

"In fact, in many ways we all compete with each other, so how can we cooperate?" Khieu Kanharith said Tuesday. "If we want to become a real bargaining power, we have to unite. We have to take a serious look at the future to plan how to deal with superpowers like the United States, and future superpowers like China."

Analysts agree any breakthroughs will be hard, even though the Asian nations are acknowledging they must integrate their economies more closely to stand a better chance at catching up with other groupings around the world.

Two examples of closer ties most cited by the Asians are the European Union, which now has free trade and a common currency used by most members, and the free trade agreement between the United States, Canada and Mexico.

Things are nowhere near that close in Southeast Asia.

"There is a lot of competition between the countries—Singapore and Malaysia can't even get their water deal settled," said Nizam Idris, an economist with IDEAglobal in Singapore.

He was referring to an ongoing feud about how much money Singapore, with few natural resources; pays its developing neighbor Malaysia for water. *AP*

A CAMBODIAN girl hangs up raw meat at the start of a day's business in Phnom Penh, host of the 8th Asean summit. Experts say that the 10 members of Asean, ranging from highly developed Singapore to tiny, poor Laos, remain so fragmented that any meaningful package within the region seems elusive. AP

McDonald's shrinks expansion strategy

CHICAGO—Golden arches have been proliferating around the globe ever since a traveling salesman named Ray Kroc had a vision about the limitless potential of fast food nearly a half-century ago.

Taking over the revolutionary Speedee Service System from brothers Richard and Maurice McDonald, Kroc built a burger-and-fries empire.

But after spreading to 30,000 restaurants in 121 countries and more than tripling in size since Kroc died in 1984, the McDonald's Corp. empire is showing widening cracks.

"It's an ideal-type brand that's in trouble," said Kevin Clancy, who heads the Copernicus marketing and research consultancy in Auburndale, Massachusetts. "They haven't had a really successful new product or many marketing successes in more than a decade. The brand has been moving ever so slowly and quietly toward oblivion for years."

Facing a crowded restaurant market, complaints about poor service and a depressed stock price, the Oak Brook, Illinois-based company has ordered up slower expansion and other measures as it tries to break an unprecedented slump.

A planned overhaul of US restaurants, its first big price-discounting campaign since 1997 and menu additions, are part of its reinvention.

Some restaurant experts doubt, however, whether any actions can fully restore the golden glow.

Americans increasingly are forsaking burger places for more upscale eateries, as well as everything from pizza chains to bakery cafes to sandwich shops.

And a baby boomer-led clamor for healthier food presents a tall order for the purveyor of Big Macs. *AP*

Japan suffering cycle of deflation, slow activity

TOKYO—Japan's economy is caught in a vicious cycle of deflation and feeble economic activity, which will be aggravated by a US slowdown, according to a white paper submitted to the Cabinet on Tuesday.

"If the US economy stagnates, we cannot deny the possibility that our nation's economic recovery might turn sour," the government's annual white paper on the economy and public finance said.

"Deflation and the sluggish real economy are causing a vicious cycle of negative synergy effects," it said.

Financial Services and Economy Minister Heizo Takenaka said real economic activity in Japan, which discounted the effects of deflation, was in line with government expectations but in nominal terms the situation was worrying.

"If you look at real economic growth, it is not lower than our expectations but if you look at it in nominal terms, the situation is getting slightly serious," Takenaka told a news conference.

For the year to March, the government has forecast zero growth in real gross domestic product and a 0.9-percent decline in nominal GDP.

The most important issues for Japan were to reverse deflation and rid the banking sector of bad loans, Takenaka said.

The white paper also emphasized the need for structural reform to revitalize the world's second largest economy.

Last week, the government unveiled a plan aimed at cleaning up bad loans from the banking sector and arresting deflation, which led to consumer prices falling for the 37th straight month in September.

A mountain of bad loans at Japanese banks—conservatively estimated by the government at 43.2 trillion yen ($353 billion) at the end of March—is undermining the financial system, according to the report.

It urged banks to speed up bad loans write-offs while extending loans to "industries with high growth potential."

The white paper also called on the Bank of Japan to continue its ultra-easy monetary policy, saying its effect in weakening the yen could boost real the economy.

A cheaper yen would help exporters by making their products more competitive abroad and increasing yen-denominated profits. *AFP*

TAKENAKA: Situation is slightly serious

EU seeks zero textile tariffs

GENEVA—The European Union presented a proposal Monday to the World Trade Organization to reduce customs tariffs on textiles, clothes and shoes to near zero, the EU mission said here.

The EU delegation to the WTO said in a statement the European Union "proposes that all members agree to deeper cuts for textiles, clothing, and footwear, with a view to bringing these tariffs within a narrow common range as close to zero as possible."

The reduction of non-agriculture tariffs is one of the main issues in the current cycle of trade talks launched by WTO ministers in Doha in November that is expected to run until the end of 2004.

The 144 WTO member countries have fixed a deadline of spring 2003 for reaching an agreement on how talks are to proceed.

At a special session on the issue held here on Monday, the European Union also proposed "that WTO members agree to reduce all tariff duties considerably by compressing them into a flatter range, within which tariff peaks and high tariffs are eliminated." *AFP*

Ford recalls half million Focus cars

DEARBORN, Michigan—The Ford Motor Co. has announced a recall of more than half a million Ford Focuses, the automaker's flagship compact car, because of potential problems with cabling and bolts.

The company said it received reports of problems with the positioning of battery cables on certain Focuses fitted with high-performance Zetec engines, which could result in smoke, wire melting or an underhood fire.

The problem had not been associated with any injuries, Ford spokesperson Todd Nissen said. *AFP*

A HANDOUT photograph of the new Nokia N-Gage- mobile phone launched in Munich. The N-Gage-, launched along with six other devices at the Nokia annual mobile Internet conference, is the first mobile phone that allows consumers to play quality games, stored and distributed on memory cards, on a color screen. NOKIA

Celine Dion in $10-M Daimler marketing deal

LOS ANGELES—Canadian superstar singer Celine Dion has signed a marketing deal worth around $10 million with US-German automaker DaimlerChrysler, industry sources said Monday.

The deal, which would last a minimum of two years, will see Dion star in a series of television commercials for the world's No. 3 automaker, the sources said, adding that an official announcement would be made on Tuesday.

DaimlerChrysler executives declined to comment on the reported deal aimed at boosting the car maker's dwindling sales.

Chrysler Group sales last month were down almost 31 percent compared to October 2001, part of what analysts saw as an overall auto industry year-on-year sales drop.

Sources close to DaimlerChrysler, who asked not to be identified, said Dion's estimated $10-million endorsement fee would not include Chrysler sponsorship of her new Las Vegas show that would open at Caesar's Palace in March. *AFP*

Disney eyes Pooh rights in 2004

LOS ANGELES—In the latest twist in a long and bitter royalty dispute over the billions of dollars generated by the sale of Winnie the Pooh merchandise, The Walt Disney Co. said a new deal has been struck giving the company exclusive worldwide rights to the Pooh characters starting in 2004.

On Monday, Disney said the granddaughter of Pooh creator AA Milne and the granddaughter of Pooh illustrator EH Shepard decided to take advantage of changes in copyright law that allowed them to reclaim their rights and enter into new agreements.

Disney said the heirs decided to reclaim the international rights granted to Disney, as well as North American rights granted to Stephen Slesinger Inc. and grant all those rights exclusively to Disney starting in 2004.

The claim was immediately challenged by an attorney representing the Slesinger estate, which was engaged in a long legal battle against Disney over the payment of royalties owed from the sale of Pooh merchandise sold in North America.

"I don't know exactly what they are talking about," said Bonnie Eskanazi, an attorney representing Slesinger. *AP*

Semiconductor firms see signs of life

HONG KONG—After a rough earnings season, semiconductor makers are looking to a rebound in the telecommunications sector to drive fresh growth and offset weak demand from PC manufacturers.

Top chipmakers, including Intel Corp., Taiwan Semiconductor Co. Ltd. and United Micro Electronics Corp., last month posted respectable third-quarter results but painted a bleak industry picture with their fourth quarter outlooks.

Most blamed the gloom on weakness from clients who make personal computers and PC components, as well as other consumer electronics to a lesser extent.

But that grim outlook was at least partially offset by a more positive view from telecoms gear makers, who, after a year of retrenchment following the tech bubble's burst, had seen their situation stabilize, according to several major players.

In announcing its third-quarter results last month, TSMC chair Morris Chang said he expects his company to post quarter-on-quarter revenue growth by the second quarter of next year, and that the growth will be driven partly by demand from the telecoms sector.

"The principle recovery will be in communications, both wired and wireless, and some consumer sectors," Chang said. "The computer sector will show a milder growth."

Communications chips accounted for 34 percent of TSMC's total revenues in the third quarter, up sharply from 26 percent in the second quarter and 16 percent in the same period last year. *Reuters*

RICHARD Branson poses with flashing models wearing masks, as Branson launches a new Virgin mobile service in Sydney. AFP

US Fed seen cutting key rates as economy stalls

WASHINGTON—Signs that the sputtering US economy is running dangerously low on fuel will force the Federal Reserve and its chair, Alan Greenspan, to cut interest rates Wednesday, experts said.

A stagnant jobs market, a decline in manufacturing and the threat of a consumer spending slump would lead policymakers to lower rates for the first time this year, they said.

Wall Street surged in expectation of a cut to the federal funds target rate, which commercial banks charge each other for overnight loans, from the current 40-year low of 1.75 percent.

The Dow Jones industrial average of 30 top stocks shot up 156.54 points, or 1.84 percent, to 8,674.18 in late-morning trade.

The risk of doing nothing when the world's most powerful economy appeared to be veering off the recovery course was too great for inaction, experts agreed.

"The economy seems to have lost momentum, and there is a good risk it will stall in the coming quarters," said Sal Guatieri, Chicago-based economist at Bank of Montreal.

"A cut certainly won't do much to boost growth in the near term, but it will take effect through next year to support demand," he said.

"By shoring up confidence, it will prevent things getting worse than they otherwise would be." A slew of grim data darkened the economic outlook: The US unemployment rate rose to 5.7 percent in October from 5.6 percent in September as businesses axed a net 5,000 jobs, marking the second month of contraction.

US consumer confidence plunged in October to the lowest level since November 1993, the Conference Board research group's consumer confidence index showed.

US sales of new cars and trucks—the pillar of consumer spending, which accounts for two-thirds of US economic activity—went into a freefall in October.

Manufacturers, hit by a dock strike and shaken by fears of war in Iraq, cut back activity in October for the second month in a row, according to an Institute for Supply Management survey index.

Joel Naroff, president and chief economist of Naroff Economic Advisors, said he had abandoned his previous belief the Federal Reserve policymakers would take no action. *AFP*

Nokia unveils game phone

MUNICH, Germany—Mobile phone maker Nokia entered a new market on Monday as it unveiled seven new devices, including one that doubles as a game console and takes aim at Nintendo's teenage hit product Gameboy Advance.

At its annual mobile Internet conference, this time in Munich, Nokia showed the N-Gage—its first mobile phone that also allows consumers to play quality games, which are stored and distributed on memory cards, on a colour screen.

The device, which will be introduced in February next year, is a direct challenge to Japan's Nintendo, which is expected to sell 12 million units of its Gameboy Advance across the globe this year, according to research firm ScreenDigest. *Reuters*

Canada wealth gap widens

OTTAWA—The gap in wealth between the rich and poor is growing dramatically in Canada, according to a nongovernmental report released Monday.

According to the sixth annual report from the not-for-profit Canadian Council on Social Development, Canadian families, whose wealth ranked them in the top 20 percent of a nationwide scale, boosted their net income by 43 percent between 1984 and 1999.

Those at the bottom of the income scale, meanwhile, saw their net wealth slip more than 51 percent during the same period, the report said. *AFP*

Pixar profit up

SAN FRANCISCO—Pixar Animation Studios Inc. on Monday reported profits rose more than seven-fold in the third quarter, powered by the DVD debut of its hit movie "Monsters, Inc.

The net profit of $46.9 million, or 87 cents per diluted share, were Pixar's strongest ever but faced an easy comparison with the year-ago quarter, when Pixar had no theatrical or home video launches and earned $6.2 million, or 12 cents per share. *Reuters*

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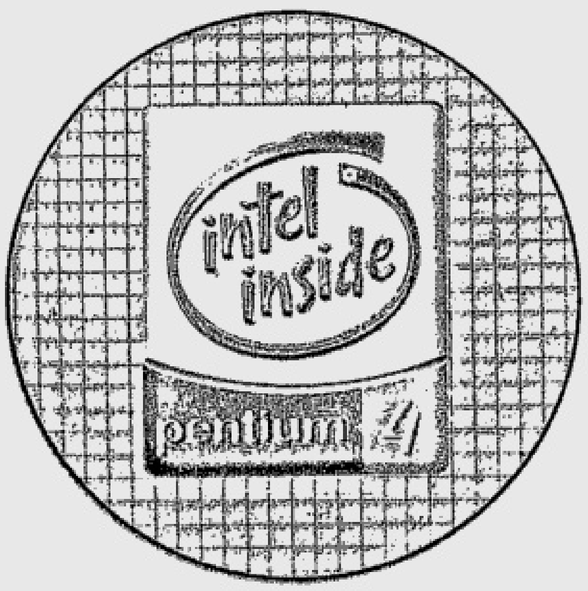

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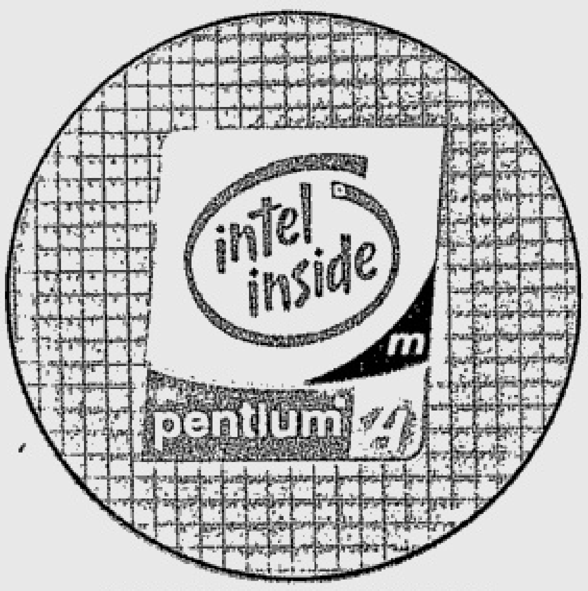

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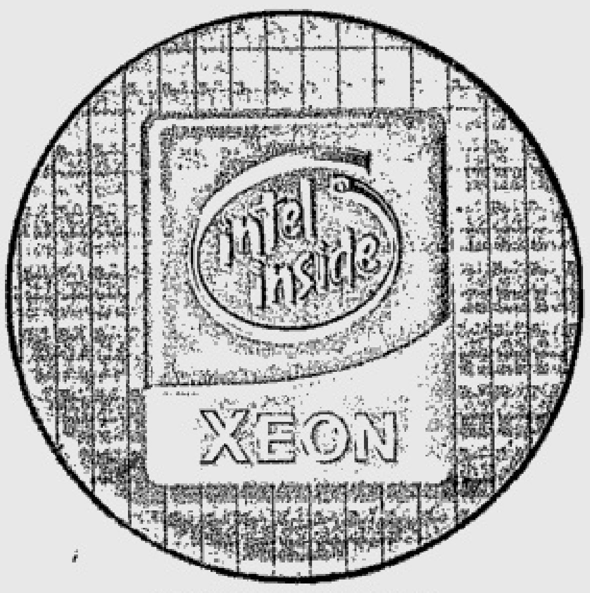

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PUBLIC NOTICES

AUCTION SALE

MI MARA PAWNSHOP of 251 Quirino Ave., Baclaran Paranaque, M.M. Auction Sale on Nov. 11, 2002, Mon., at 4:00 in the afternoon. Respectively, June 1 - July 11, 2002.
Sons of J. Lanuza, Auctioneer

Voluntary Service Overseas is a UK-based volunteer sending organization which provides professional and experienced volunteers at the request of non-governmental (NGO), governmental and community organisations in the Philippines. There are 40 professional volunteers currently working across the Philippines in the fields of community-based natural resource management, peace building, gender & development, informal education particularly with deaf communities, and micro-enterprise development.

VSO Philippines (VSOP) welcomes applications for two (2) highly qualified and committed staff to work with VSOP's local partners and foreign volunteers professionals in networking, sharing skills and knowledge, and effecting meaningful and sustainable change:

I) Programme Officer (Code: PO)

The successful candidate will contribute to developing and managing VSOP's programme thrusts especially in secure and sustainable livelihoods, gender and disabilities. He/She shall likewise be involved in project and organization development, networking and advocacy , and partnership building. Main tasks include negotiating and strengthening strategic partnerships and facilitating volunteer placement and support.

Essential skills, experience and qualities for this post are:

a. **Knowledge and experience of development work:** at least 5 years professional experience in development and/or volunteer sector;
b. **Project and organization development experience,** including resource mobilization and the development of M & E systems in programme and finance.
c. **Strong interpersonal and people management skills** especially in a cross-cultural context
d. **Strong Communication and learning skills:** effective research and evaluation skills and excellent oral and writing skills in English for various audiences; including knowledge of Microsoft office applications
e. **Knowledge and competence in at least two (2) of VSOP's social development sectors:** natural resource management, peace building, gender, deaf education, micro and small enterprise development
f. **Organisation, facilitation and presentation skills:** able to organize, and facilitate VSO workshop, training and conferences. Good presentation skills, including knowledge of PowerPoint and other presentation applications. Able to simultaneously implement many tasks under pressure; with experience of handling a heavy and routine office workload, good organisation and time management.
g. **Ability to travel:** Though based in Manila, S/he will monitor the effectiveness of existing partnerships and volunteer placements at different places in the Philippines and attend conferences, trainings, seminars and meetings locally and internationally. S/he will therefore be expected to be on tour every month.

This post is initially offered on a six-month contract.
Closing date: 20 November 2002 Starting date: 15 December 2002

ii.) Office Manager (Code: OM)

Responsible for the management and coordination of all administration work within the programme office, and ensuring that the office functions effectively and efficiently making best use of VSOP's resources.

Essential skills, experience and qualities for this post are:

a. **Work experience :** minimum five (5) years experience with office management and administration, including (a) cost-benefit analysis; (b) line management of administrative staff; (c) supervision, monitoring, and control of vehicles, equipment, and supplies
b. **Experience in working with an international organization** with knowledge of expat visa application procedures and processes is an advantage.
c. **Effective computer skills.** Competence in Office 2000, a sufficient understanding and experience in using Word and Excel and also Networking
d. **Strong personal qualities:** Mature and objective, assertive though tactful and diplomatic, patient and positive demeanor, and with a good sense of humor
e. **Ability to motivate and lead a team, flexibility to adapt own and others** work to the needs of the office
f. **Strong communication in English:** (oral and written) to be able to communicate effectively to VSOP
g. **Able to make strategic decisions**, and become a good team player; willing to work under pressure and work out of hours
h. **Possession** of a driver's license is an advantage

This post is offered on an initial one-year contract.
Closing date: 20 November 2002 Starting date: 1 March 2003

Please send letter of application and curriculum vitae **marked confidential** to: **PROGRAMME DIRECTOR, VSO Philippines, No. 20 South Lawin Avenue corner Bacolod Road, PHILAM Homes, West Avenue, Quezon City, 1104;** email address: vso-phil@qinet.net

Kindly mark on the envelope the **Code** of the post you are applying. We regret to say that VSO can only respond to short listed candidates who will be sent an application form in the week beginning 22 November 2002.

Interviews will be held in Manila: 27 November 2002 for Programme Officer and 28 November 2002 for Officer Manager.

PUBLIC NOTICES

AUCTION SALE

MARA PAWNSHOP BR. of 2410-18 P. Gil St. Sta. Ana Manila. Auction Sale on Nov. 11, 2002, Mon. at 2:30 in the afternoon, respectively, June 11 - July 11, 2002.
Sons of J. Lanuza, Auctioneer

MARA PAWNSHOP I, II, III, IV and Comembo Br. of Makati City. Auction Sale on Nov. 11, 2002. Mon. at 10:30, 11:30, 1:30, 12:30 and 8:30 in the morning and on the afternoon. Respectively June 11-July 11, 2002. Sons of J Lanuza, Auctioneer

NATION PAWNSHOP, INC., Poblacion, Meyc. Bulacan will auction unredeemed pledges of May, '02 on Nov. 21, '02 10am. Lanuza & Sons-Auctioneer.

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is given that the estate of the late AGRIPINA B. RODRIGUEZ consisting of real property was extrajudicially settled among her heirs as per Doc 151079 Page 35 Bk 2 S of 2002 of the R.P. Consulate, Malaysia & Doc 483 Page 98 Bk XXIV S of 2002 of Notary Public Rodolfo C. Sabio of QC (PDI-Nov. 6,13&20,2002)

Notice is hereby given that the Estate of **Jose Gaudinez, Jr.** has been extrajudicially settled per Doc. 322; Page No. 66; Book No. 50; Series of 2001 of Notary Public Mario G. Ramos of the City of Manila.

NOTICE OF LOSS

Lost FEU Stock Certificates of DOLORES GLORIA Nos.: 30867 (60Sh.), 22809 (1Sh.), 29495 (10Sh.), 21530 (1Sh.), 17131 (1Sh.), 8550 (3Sh) PDI-Nov. 6, 13 & 20, 2002

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DR. RAYMUND MARAMAG BANATAO

UERMMC Class '96

Peacefully joined the Lord on November 2, 2002
at the Cagayan Valley Medical Center, Carig, Tuguegarao, Cagayan.

His wife, **Dr. Mildred "Jette" Ferrer-Banatao** and his little daughter **Micah** assured him of God's promises until the last hours.

His **Mama Ofing**, brothers **JR** and **Ruel** and sister **Leah**, his **Lola Ilay**, his mother-in-law **Mamang Angeles** and father-in-law **Papang Miguel**, and all his supportive uncles, aunts, cousins, brother-in-law, sisters-in-law, and other relatives request you to remember him in your prayers.

His remains lie in state at the family residence in Iguig, Cagayan. Interment will be on November 9, 2002 at the Iguig Cemetery after necrological services.

"At this time of a great loss, we find peace in completely entrusting Dr. Raymund to Him who has set eternity in the hearts of men."

THE PMA (DIMASUPIL) CLASS OF 1967
WISHES TO ANNOUNCE WITH DEEP REGRETS
THE UNTIMELY DEMISE OF OUR
BELOVED MISTAH

BGEN GEORGE OLEA VALLEJERA, AFP (Ret)

Who died in the Grace of our Lord
on the 3rd day of November 2002 at the age of 60.

The Class with his loving family, wife **Lea**; children **Guillermo, Ma. Lucia, Georlyn**; brothers **Ricomartin, Sammy, Eduardo, Roger**; sisters **Lilian Mythyl** and **Marietta** request pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at the Resurrection 3 Chapel, Arlington Memorial Chapel, G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Necrological Services will be held on Friday, November 8, 2002 at 7:00 PM at the Camp Aguinaldo Evangelical Chapel (near DND), Quezon City. Interment will be on Saturday, November 9, 2002 High Noon at the Libingan ng mga Bayani, Fort Bonifacio, Metro Manila.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
❶ Copy of Death Certificate
❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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"I came forth from
the Father, and have come
into the world;
I am leaving the world again,
and going to the Father."
John 16:28

We remember and pray
for the eternal rest of the soul
of our dear

JOSE VICTOR "JV" FRANCO

loving son and brother
on his 4th death anniversary
on November 6, 2002.

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of his soul
will be offered in churches
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INTERMENT NOTICE

Name	Date of Interment	Time	Place of Interment	Place of Wake
JOHNNY A. ALBERTO	Nov. 6	9:00 AM	Holy Gardens Memorial Park Taytay, Rizal	Mulawin St., Brgy. Sta. Ana, Taytay, Rizal
ROSAURO SAPIN, JR.	Nov. 6	2:00 PM	Holy Gardens Greenhills Memorial Park Calamba City	Laguna Memorial Chapel Calamba City
CATALINA AUSTRIA	Nov. 6	1:00 PM	Holy Gardens Greenhills Memorial Park Calamba City	Pulo Canlubang, Calamba City

www.holygardens.com

CONCEPCION AVILA DE LEON

(Widow of the late SOTERO OBLEPIAS DE LEON)

Peacefully joined our Creator on November 3, 2002 at the age of 77.

Her remains lie in state at Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels, Sucat Road, Parañaque City.

Interment will be on November 07, 2002, 2:00 PM at the Manila Memorial Park, Sucat Road, Parañaque City.

ANGELINA PANES BALQUIN CENTENO

Peacefully joined our Lord on October 30, 2002
at the age of 92.

Her loving children and grandchildren, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Loyola Memorial Chapel, Guadalupe, Makati City. Interment will be on Thursday, November 7, 2002, 12:00 noon at the Heritage Memorial Park, Fort Bonifacio, Makati City.

Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. Matthew 10:39

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NOTICE TO ALL CANADIANS

The Canadian Embassy encourages all Canadian citizens residing in the Philippines on a temporary or permanent basis to register with the Canadian Embassy, Manila. This will assist the Embassy in contacting you during times of emergency or natural disaster.

Registration Forms can be obtained at the Embassy which is located on the 9th Floor, Allied Bank Centre, 6754 Ayala Avenue, Makati City, as well as, by fax at (632) 810-4299 and by telephone at (632) 867-0001 (For mail requests).

AVIS À TOUS LES CANADIENS

L'Ambassade du Canada invite tous les citoyens Canadiens résidant temporairement ou en permanence aux Philippines à sienregister à l'Ambassade du Canada à Manille afin de permettre à l'Ambassade de communiquer avec vous en cas d'urgence ou de désastre.

Les fiches d'inscription sont disponibles à l'Ambassade à l'adresse suivante: 9ième, étage, Allied Bank Centre, 6754 avenue Ayala, ville Makati ainsi que par fax au (632) 810-4299 et par téléphone au (632) 867-0001 (envoi par la poste).

http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/manila/

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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

PNOC Exploration Corporation (PNOC EC) invites interested contractors to apply for eligibility and to submit sealed bids for the following services at Batangas Coal Terminal:

WOR No.	DESCRIPTION	APPROVED BUDGET (2-Year Contract)
BCT 2002 001	*Stevedoring, Arrastre and Handling Services of Bulk Cargo*	*PHP 52,297,000.00*
BCT 2002 002	*Hauling of Coal and Other Bulk Cargo from Batangas Coal Terminal to Various Customers*	*PHP 248,907,480.00*

Eligibility and Tender Documents shall be available for issuance at the above address from the Operations Services Group from **October 30, 2002** to **November 15, 2002**, upon presentation of a Letter of Intent and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of PESOS: Five Hundred (PHP 500.00).

Only contractors who will comply with PNOC EC's eligibility requirements shall be allowed to participate in the public bidding.

For the purpose of clarifications, bidders are invited to attend the pre-bidding conference which will be conducted on **November 12, 2002** at 10:00 a.m. at the Bldg. I Conference Room of the above address. Attendance is compulsory and failure of prospective bidders to attend shall mean disqualification during the actual bidding.

The public bidding shall incorporate the use of electronic bid submission. Deadline for submission of Eligibility Requirements, Bid and Tender Documents will be set during the Pre-Bidding Conference.

PNOC EC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any informality therein, or to accept such bids or to award any part thereof to any bidder/s whose bid/s is/are considered most advantageous to PNOC EC.

This publication is also posted at DBM Website: www.procurementservices.org

(Sgd.) RICARDO S. BASALLO, JR.
Chairman, Contracts Award Committee

(PDI - Nov. 6, 2002)

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OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
NATIONAL HOUSING AUTHORITY

NOTICE OF DISPOSITION

The ***National Housing Authority*** is inviting ***Offers to Purchase a 107.2234 hectare property*** on an "***As Is – Where Is***" basis. This property is known as the ***NHA-Calauan Housing Project*** located at ***Barangay Dayap, Calauan, Laguna***.

The property, covering ***Sites 1, 2 & 3***, comprised of ***7,472*** serviced lots. ***1,843*** housing units (row houses) are already constructed within Site 1. Lot sizes range from ***40*** to ***60*** square meters.

Transfer Certificate of Titles (TCT) are under the name of the ***National Housing Authority*** and are as follows: ***T-187277 (588,602 sq.m.); T187278 (122,974 sq.m.); T-189369 (47,292 sq.m.); T-189370 (90,236 sq.m.); T-189371 (130,001 sq.m.); T-189372 (98,129 sq.m.).***

Offers must be submitted on or before November 15, 2002, office hours.

Technical materials can be secured from the ***Southern Luzon/Bicol Area Management Office (SLB-AMO)***. NHA Main Building, Elliptical Road, Quezon City. For inquiry, please call ***Arch. Virginia R. Domingo, AMO-SLB*** or ***Arch. Susana V. Nonato, DAMO-SLB*** at the following Tel. Nos. ***(02) 922-9820; (02) 922-3319; (02) 928-4561 local 501 & 506.***

(Sgd.) EDGARDO D. PAMINTUAN
General Manager

(PDI – Nov. 6 & 10, 2002)

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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Davao City Water District (DCWD) hereby invites all interested parties to apply for eligibility & to bid for the supply & delivery of the following Pumps & Motors:

Package	Description	Ceiling of Bid Price
1	1 unit 125 Hp Vertical Turbine Pump and Motor for Dumoy Well #33	P 1,400,000.00
2	1 unit 200 Hp Vertical Turbine Pump and Motor for Alambre-Lubogan Production Well	P 1,400,000.00
3	1 unit 125 Hp Submersible Pump and Motor for Malagos Production Well	P 1,400,000.00
4	1 unit 200 Hp Submersible Pump and Meter for Tugbok Well #4 at New Loon	P 1,400,000.00
5	1 unit 100 Hp Submersible Pump and Motor for Tugbok Well #1 upgrading	P 860,000.00
6	1 unit 150 Hp Submersible Pump and Motor for Tugbok Well #2 upgrading	P 1,100,000.00
7	1 Unit 125 Hp Submersible Pump and Motor for Panacan Well #1 upgrading	P 650,000.00
8	1 unit 125 Hp Vertical Turbine Pump & Motor for Panacan Well #2 upgrading	P 1,200,000.00
	TOTAL:	P 9,410,000.00

Eligibility requirements are available at the Purchasing Division Office starting *October 30, 2002*, during its business hours. Deadline for submission of eligibility documents will be on or before *November 13, 2002*. Schedule of Pre-Bid Conference and Opening of Bids will be announced later.

Suppliers/Manufacturers and Dealers with pending overdue deliveries and acceptance are not allowed to partipate.

DCWD resesrves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any formality/informality of the bids received and to accept only such bids which are advantageous to the District.

(Sgd.) ALFONSO E. LAID
Asst. General Manager for Administration
Chairman, Bid & Canvass Committee

(PDI – Oct. 30 & Nov. 6, 2002)

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas
Maynila, Pilipinas

DISPOSAL COMMITTEE

NOTICE OF PUBLIC AUCTION

Notice is hereby given that the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas will sell **VARIOUS SCRAP MATERIALS** located at BSP Main Complex, A. Mabini cor. P. Ocampo Sr. Sts., Malate, Manila thru sealed bids to be received by the Committee not later than ***10:00 A.M.*** on ***November 20, 2002*** at Room MR-2C, 2nd Floor, 5-Storey Building, BSP Main Complex, A. Mabini cor. P. Ocampo Sr. Streets, Malate, Manila.

Interested parties may inspect the aforesaid items at their locations before the bidding date.

Forms and further information may be obtained from the Committee's Executive Officer c/o Ms. Crisanta F. Reyes, Administrative Services Department, Room 110, Ground Floor, 5-Storey Building, A. Mabini cor. P. Ocampo Sr. Streets, Malate, Manila, Telephone No. 525-87-86.

(Sgd.) MELPIN A. GONZAGA
Chairman

(PDI-November 6, 2002)

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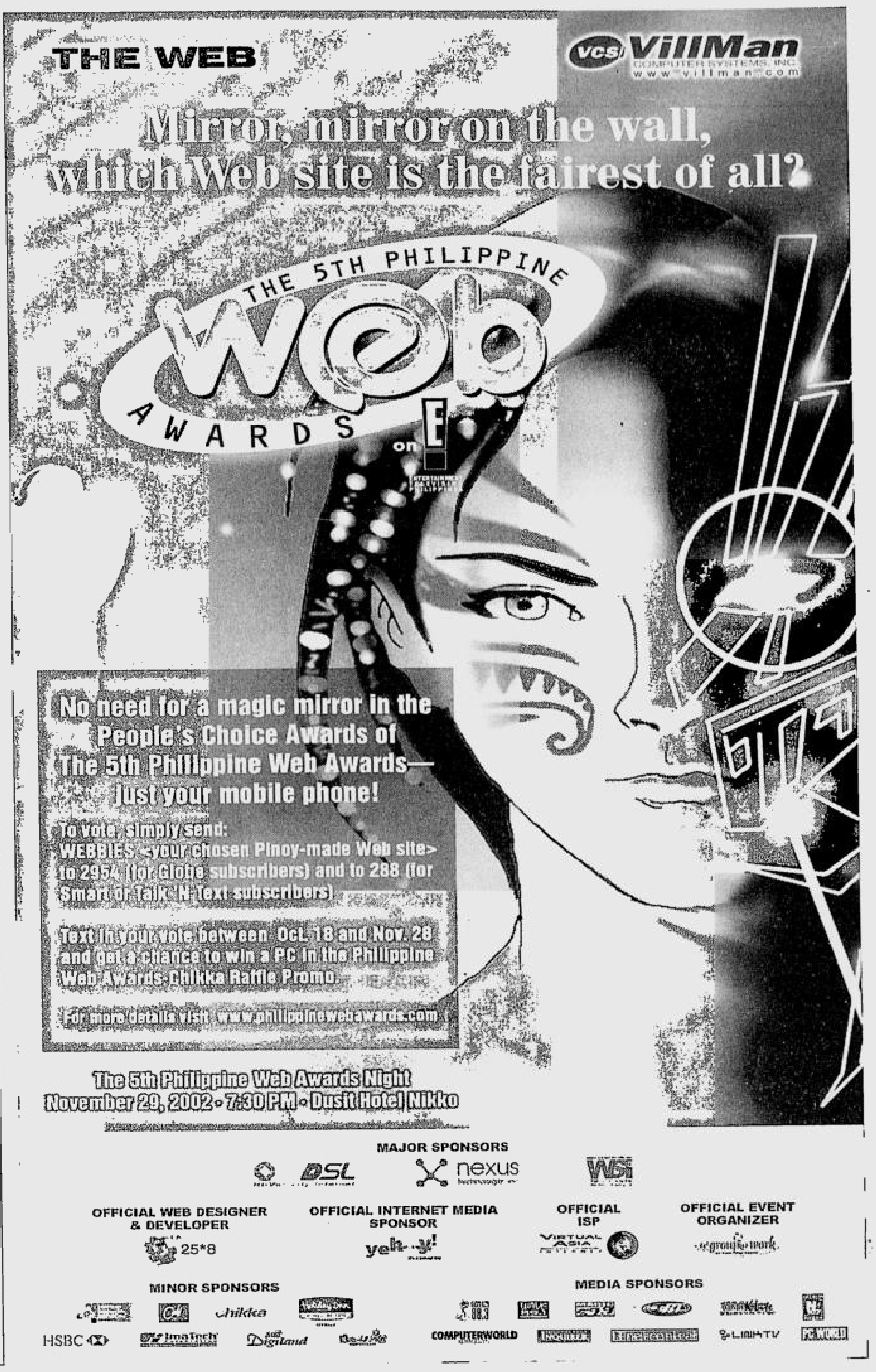
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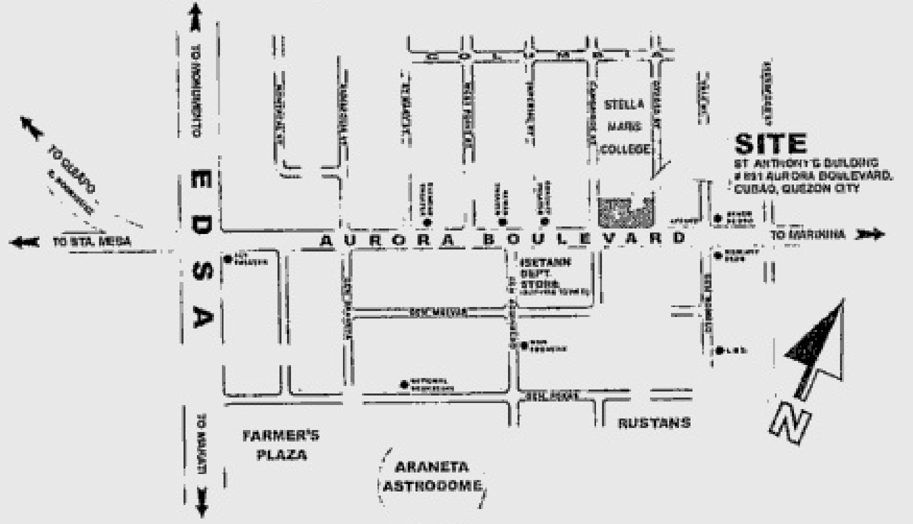


PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

People, Events & Products

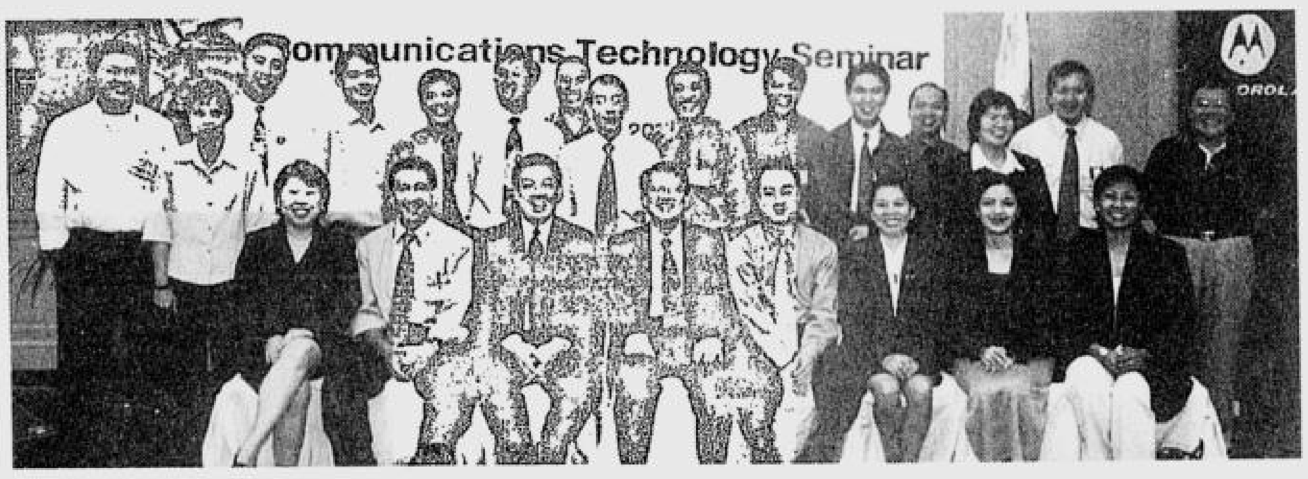
Burlington supports varsity cage teams

In line with its corporate commitment to assist in youth and sports development, Burlington Industries Phils, Inc. has thrown its support behind several university and college basketball teams' quest for excellence in their respective leagues.

In the NCAA, Burlington is backing up the San Sebastians Stags of Coach Turo Valenzona and the JRU Heavy Bombers of Coach Boy de Vera; in the UAAP, the UST Tigers of Coach Aric del Rosario; and in the CUSA, the PCCR Panthers of Coach Johnny Tam.

The maker of Burlington, Puma and Bally socks has provided team uniforms, socks and other players' needs to the above mentioned school cage squads.

In the national scene, Burlington is the main sponsor of the RP Youth and RP Young Men's teams.



MOTOROLA'S LATEST INFO SOLUTIONS

Motorola Communications Philippines Inc.'s (MCPI) commercial, government and industrial solutions sector (CGISS) has concluded a series of technology seminars for various government agencies where it previewed its newest suite of communication and information solutions for the public safety and security, utilities, and telecommunications industries. Key officials and officers from the AFP, PNP, Meralco, NTC, and the Presidential Security Guards attended the seminars. Executives from Maynilad Water Services, Manila Water Services, Laguna Water District, and independent power producers such as Mirant Energy, Covanta Power, CBK Power Ltd., Davao Light and Power, Cebu Electric, and First Gas Power Corp. also attended the seminars. Regional and local Motorola executives led by David Lum, director, CGISS business development of Solutions Offerings, facilitated the presentations. Chang Kar Weng, country sales manager for Motorola Philippines' CGISS direct business, provided the sector group's thrust of providing Motorola's latest solutions for public security and safety. Shown are executives from Meralco and Motorola at the Technology Seminar.

Kabayan Noli opens furniture fest

THE 23rd Philippine Furniture Festival "Bare Necessities" opens with a bang on Nov. 9 with Sen. Noli "Kabayan" de Castro, popular TV journalist/broadcaster and public servant, and Mayor Lourdes Fernando of Marikina, Metro Manila's most efficient city, leading the opening and ribbon cutting ceremonies at the Megatrade Hall, SM Megamall. Dr. Miraflor Bunyi, wife of Press Secretary Ignacio Bunyi, has been invited to grace the opening ceremonies at the Festival Supermall also on Nov. 9. The furniture fest, organized by the Chamber of Furniture Industries of the Philippines (CFIP), runs until Nov. 17 in Megamall, Carousel Court of the Festival Supermall, Alabang, and Robinsons Starmills, San Fernando Pampanga. The show, which is free to the public, once again gathers the country's best and most creative furniture manufacturers and exporters.

CEBU PACIFIC

CEBU PACIFIC SPONSORS 2ND DM FORUM

Acknowledging the importance of trends, strategies and techniques in direct marketing to be presented by the industry's finest marketing practitioners and experts, Cebu Pacific sponsors the 2nd Philippine Direct Marketing Forum (DM Forum) on Nov. 13 and 14 at the Shangri-la Hotel, Makati City. Shown, from left are Lui Mauban, project director, 2nd Direct Marketing Forum, Cebu Pacific top executives Patricio Alcaraz, VP, passenger sales and industry affair, Salvador Ramirez, VP/GM, cargo and passenger sales services, Pascual San Juan, VP, airport services, Ceres Noble, director, market planning and research, Rolando Nunez, VP, commercial planning, Charlie Manio, director, advertising, and Ardy Roberto, chair and producer of the 2nd DM Forum, formalizing the arrangement. The Philippine Direct Marketing Forum is one of the country's major marketing events. For particulars, call 813-2732, 813-2703, 0916-5884877, e-mail dmforum@edsamall.com.ph, or log on to www.dmforum.net.

CITIBANK PAYLITE BEETLEMANIA LAUNCHED

Citibank recently held a wild and wacky psychedelic show to mark the launch of its PayLite Beetlemania promo at the Shangri-La Edsa mall. The colorful '60s-flavored spectacle was hosted by tandem comic talents Djorge Javier and Bimbo Cerrudo, who played 'Dr. DeVille' and 'Justin Towers' of the Austin Powers movie. The PayLite Beetlemania promo, Citibank's biggest promo for the year, will be giving away four new edition Volkswagen Beetle cars to all Citibank cardholders who will charge a minimum purchase of P3,000 to PayLite Installment Plan in a single transaction. The New Beetle sports a 1.6 4-cylinder in-line aluminum engine block, 4-speed automatic transmission, anti-lock braking system, dual front and front-side impact air bags, and a host of other advanced safety features in its modern carapace design. Winners will be drawn in four raffle draws scheduled on Nov. 22 and Dec. 13, and on Jan. 19 and March 23, 2003. Shown is the comic duo frolicking in front of one of the new Volkswagen Beetles.

Media person agonizes over 'envelopmental' journalism

By Tita Datu Puangco

Advice
FOR THE
ANXIOUS PERSON
AT WORK

I GRADUATED with a mass communication degree from Saint Louis University in Baguio City six years ago. Today, I am a broadcast journalist in our province. As far as my career is concerned, I can say that I am more than satisfied. For example, in the past elections, I was able to interview all the presidentiables. This kind of work gives me fulfillment and I try to write only for the people, for the common good.

However, provincial writers do not receive much compensation unlike national writers. We depend very much on advertisers who are either businessmen or politicians. Many of the local journalists depend on payola or the so-called "envelopes." At first, I was amazed that this is the practice. I know this is wrong and violates our code of ethics as journalists. I stopped writing for almost a year not knowing if I should pursue this career or not. And yet, I still want to be of service to our country as a broadcast journalist.

Please tell me, is it right to be disturbed or should I just accept payola and "envelopes" as a way of life? How can I as an individual influence others in the profession?

Concerned Journalist

I can empathize with your situation. I know how difficult it is for provincial radio stations or newspapers to make profit from their operations because of the small size of their markets and readership or listenership base. This in turn results in low compensation for journalists.

My first bit of advice is to accept the low compensation as fact, as reality. With the economic situation of the country today, expect even more difficult times for provincial media. My admiration goes to provincial journalists who for me are real heroes, keeping the spirit of mass communications alive through the difficulties.

Other sources of income

If you continue to work in the province, I suggest you take on another job to augment your income. I am sure, given your qualifications, you can teach in a local college when you are not on the air. Or else start a micro-enterprise. Your becoming financially independent will ensure that you will remain steadfast in your principle not to accept payola or "envelopes."

You are right to be disturbed. It is tough to accept grease money and at the same time, maintain your independence as a journalist. What one has to be careful about is conflict of interest. Conflict of interest makes it difficult for you to maintain fairness and objectivity. Yes, it is sad that some journalists (I hope they are not in the majority) need "envelopes" to survive. In an earlier article, I mentioned the steps to take when one is confronted with an ethical dilemma.

Choice

It is a sad commentary that ethics does not seem to be a way of life in our country. It is not only in the media profession where there are unethical practices. We witness policemen on the take, tax agents blatantly squeezing money out of businessmen, corrupt politicians, etc. Often, we ask if we can ever get out of this economics of poverty and put our country and our ethics in order. But then again, all of us know that poverty is not an excuse for unlawful or unethical conduct. You are right. Each one of us can go against the current. We have the power of individual choice standing for what we believe is right and true.

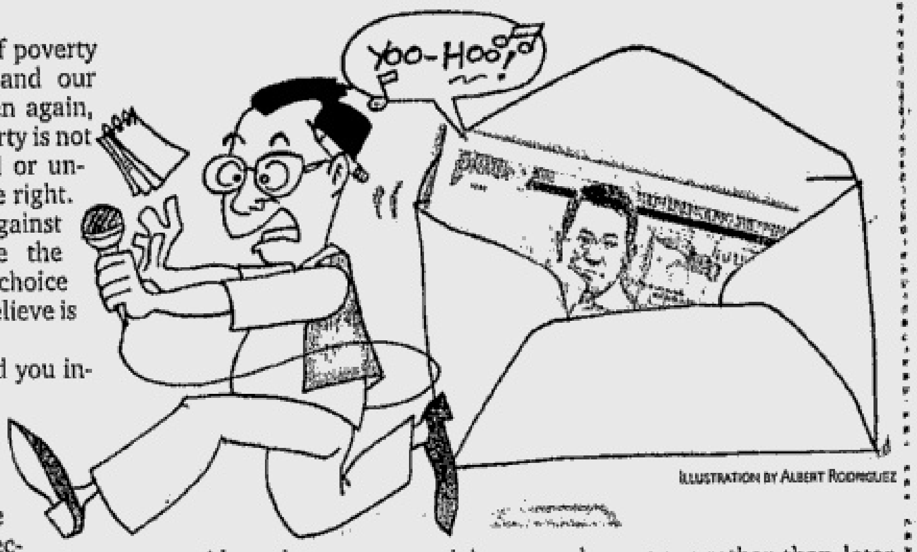


ILLUSTRATION BY ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

You asked, how could you influence others? It is tough introducing culture change, especially at a national level. Even orders from the head of state do not necessarily guarantee that culture change happens. Experts in change management tell us consistent effort need to happen in three sectors: commitment of leadership (in this case, the media association leaders at national or provincial level), the participation and involvement of members, and proactive change support that will provide training and communication for change to happen.

Ethics revolution

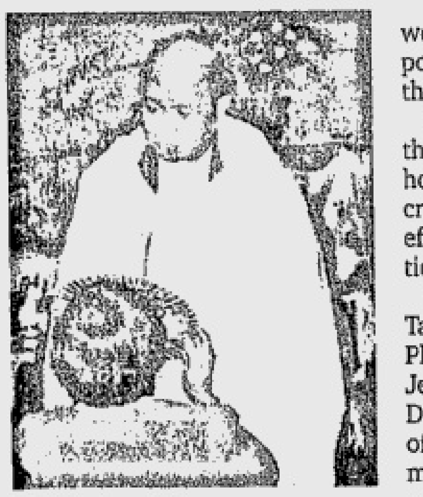
You can begin a small ethics revolution. First, invite another media practitioner and share your idea about not receiving payola. Constantly reinforce each other's resolve. Speak, but allow your behavior to speak for as we know, behavior can speak louder than words. In your radio program, why not make ethics a conversation piece? As a member of a media association, recommend creating an ethics committee that would try to influence in a positive way the diffusion of ethical practices. An even more proactive action could be the development of alternative sources of ethical income for members. If you and your friends stick to this resolve sooner rather than later, ethical practice would be the norm.

You can count on my prayers for remaining steadfast in your resolve and for future projects you may launch to influence your media circles to practice an ethical code of conduct.

(Ms Puangco is CEO and president of Ancilla Enterprise Development Consulting. Send comments, feedback or requests for advice through e-mail to ancillaedc@pacific.net.ph or fax to 892-2902.)

BREAKFAST CHAT

Spirituality at work eases conflict



GUZMAN

By Ricky B. Garcia

A COMPLEX mix of personalities people today's workplaces. Different behavioral styles, attitudes, values and perceptions create unique challenges for managers, team leaders and co-workers. Often, conflict and opposing points of view abound in the workplace.

You may not be able to change this situation but you can change how you respond to it and increase your ability to deal more effectively with difficult situations when they arise.

Studio 23's Breakfast host Ria Tanjuatco and McGraw Hill Philippines marketing executive Jenny Javier interviewed Fr. Domie Guzman, spiritual director of the Buklod ng Pag-Ibig Community, on how to effectively deal with conflict at work in the People at Work segment on Breakfast.

PaW: What is the best way to cultivate better relationships at the workplace?

Domie: Communication and communicating. As in any relationship, workplace relationships are best cared for with clear communication of details and instructions for work. Nothing should be presumed or presupposed.

PaW: How can you reduce conflict and misunderstanding in the workplace?

Domie: Conflict and misunderstanding in the workplace come from two sources-conflicting feelings at work (personal level) or unclear instructions on work details and arrangements (professional level). Whatever the source, the important thing is to address and dialogue on the issues as soon as possible.

PaW: What if you are new in the company and you observe that there are several issues that affect individuals and team performance?

Domie: Being new in the company is an advantage. People at work would perceive you as "apolitical"-that is, you are not yet affected by alignments and polarizations in the workplace. I think it is best that you discuss the issues with the persons and with the superiors concerned. This is the first and most important service you give to the company-your honest evaluation of realities at work in the group.

PaW: How can you get the ones in conflict to be more open-minded and less emotional?

Domie: Dissect the issues during the dialogue. Simplify the issues. Number them. Classify them: personal or professional. Oftentimes, emotionally charged conversations happen when the issues are muddled! First, solve the professional issues with a review of workload and workflow. In the over-enthusiasm of people at work, they may have actually transgressed boundaries of competence. Second, on personal issues, listen to feelings between the lines of dialogue. Empathize, feedback and resolve where possible. Forgive and overlook also as needed.

PaW: What if there are conflicts left unacknowledged and unmanaged that are creating corporate crisis?

Domie: Concern and honest evaluation are virtues of working as a team. Discuss first the issues with the proper persons. Let them do their own share of evaluation and resolving the issues.

PaW: How can a boss respond to personal and professional conflict?

Domie: He should be cool and levelheaded and know how to deal with his temper. Temper your temper! Many times, at the end of the day, what matters is not the resolution of the conflicts, but how you handled the conflict and how you handled yourself.

PaW: What is the key to healing the rifts that divide us in the workplace?

Domie: Have spirituality in your workplace. Spirituality is what makes us able to view realities with transcendence. It is more than prayer. It is contemplation and action, like, treating others the way you want them to treat you. It also involves looking at imperfections with a different slant-that they are part of human life and activity. Positively taken, imperfections can be spaces where we begin to see things differently.

PaW: What other tips you can give for positive resolution to workplace conflicts?

Domie: I like the Pinoy term for work: "hanapbuhay." We should treat the workplace not as a separate component of life, not as a separate activity. We should see the workplace as truly a breath of our own life.

(Send feedback to drgarci88@yahoo.com*)*

Working moms, dads dream of better parenting

WORKING MOM

An Mercado Alcantara

WHEN Maricel Laxa-Pangilinan dreams, other parents sit up to listen.

At least, that's what the organizers of the First Philippine Parenting Convention, held at the Bonifacio Tent last week, implied. As the story goes, unable to sleep one night, Maricel jotted down the thoughts that kept her mind awake. It turned out to be the seeds of an event that would bring parents and parenting experts together in a setting much like a business convention to discuss, well, the art, science, vocation, mission, and yes, business of parenting.

Big business support

To be sure, big business embraced Maricel's vision. They came in full force (telecoms, pharmaceuticals, banks, publishers and food giants) with banners lining main avenues, perimeter fences, and the entire tent itself. By lending their name, and we assume their financial muscle, these businesses were sending a signal that they are ready to support all sincere efforts to strengthen the family.

And Maricel didn't fail them. Sincerity is what she has an abundance of. She showed it consistently during the convention: personally looking after the delegates' needs, offering help to participants encountering difficulties, and humbly taking her place in the crowd as just one mother among many.

Sincerity

Although cynics questioned their credentials, asserting that they had neither the academic nor clinical background to mount such an event, the Pangilinan couple (Anthony supported his wife's vision by providing his organizational expertise and experience) stayed true to the essence of their calling. They did not pose as experts nor take a know-it-all posture. They consistently took the voice of the earnest parent eager to learn more and share more. They showed their vulnerabilities, their struggles and their hope that many more are in the same parenting boat. It was this sincerity that cut through all self- and group-interests to become a force strong enough to gather at least three hundred other like-minded parents.

As Maricel sat among the crowd listening to the stirring lecture of Fr. Ruben Tanseco, founder of the Center for Family Ministries, on the role of the family in our country's moral recovery, she was visibly moved. This was, at last, her dream come true. Words of wisdom from people like Tanseco who studied and prayed about the role of the family, shared to parents just like her so eager for inspiration.

Message for fathers

Looking at the convention delegates comprised mostly of mothers, Tanseco began by saying: "This message is for all the fathers who are not here today." It is the dads, he explained, who must inspire our children to grow in love of God, love of others, and love of country. "In many homes, the mother is the center of moral spirituality," Tanseco pointed out, "yet we speak of God as fathers" Then he challenged: do we have enough fathers who inspire stewardship in our children, the future leaders of our country? Are there enough fathers who understand that fulfilling their role as stewards means showing their children that to love God is to love our country, to look after the environment, to work for justice, and to fight against corruption?

Less controlling moms

Turning to the mothers, Tanseco said: "Mothers have to be less and less in control for fathers to be participative. Mothers should decrease (their control over the kids) so that fathers could increase." Filipino moms, working or stay-at-home, have a strong tendency to take full charge of the children, subconsciously elbowing out the dads. "We should not encourage fathers to abdicate." This means giving them as much time with the kids, as many duties over the kids, and most importantly, praying together with the kids.

When Tanseco's speech ended to a thundering applause from the audience, Anthony, the lead father among the delegates, took the cue and gave tribute to the handful of fathers who did come to the convention. He asked them to stand and gave them their deserved ovation. At that moment, Anthony later revealed, Maricel had yet another vision: a festival for fathers.

The hard working FPPC team held their breath, they knew better than to moan about how much work it took to put up an event of this scale and how tired they were. They knew, just as before, when Maricel dreams, Anthony makes it happen and parents do listen.

(Send feedback to mwm_abscbnskyinet.net*)*

'We can't save...'

From page B0

plight of the young patients at the PGH.

Cruz is at PGH by 7:30 a.m. and usually stays until 8 p.m. In between rounds in wards 9 and 11, there are conferences and seminars, Cruz says. While making the rounds, he has to do errands and move around patients in a wheelchair.

Inspiration

His task as a social worker emerges in the paperwork, through which he appeals to agencies like the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office and the Philippine Gaming and Amusement Corp. to give financial assistance to PGH patients.

He says he finds more challenge and inspiration in treating kids now that he is himself a father.

"The kids are so innocent, Some are born with defects and they just have to live with what God has given them. They can't tell you what's wrong, so it's more fulfilling when you cure their problems," Cruz said.

He has been tempted by opportunities to study and eventually practice medicine abroad where the demand for health practitioners is great, but the young doctor had turned these down out of a sense of obligation to his country.

Filipino identity

He says it was his growing-up years in Brunei, where his parents had worked for 35 years, which molded his identity as a Filipino in a foreign land. When his family returned to the Philippines, Cruz studied at the Ateneo de Manila High School where his resolve to do something for fellow Filipinos was reinforced.

Now that he is living his dream, Cruz admits that even with the generosity of donors and the competence of the pediatricians, work in a government hospital never ends.

"It gets tiring at times, and we all get frustrated, especially when a child dies because the parents are too poor to afford medicines," the doctor says. "We can't save the world, but at least we're trying to do what we can where we are," he says.

Hone your management skills at the People at Work Live! Seminar Series

MANAGERS and would-be managers now have a chance to enhance their management skills at the final offering for the year of the People at Work Live! Seminar Series for Metro Manila on Nov. 11, 12 and 13 from 5:30 to 8 p.m. It will be held at the Santiago Hall, Equitable PCI Bank Tower 1, Makati Ave. Makati City.

On Nov. 11, Alan Barker, chair of the Australia-based Strategic Consulting Services, will give a talk on "Effective Interpersonal Communication." He will discuss the components of this critical competency and will teach how to effectively communicate with others.

On Nov. 12, Josie Santamaria, president of Career Systems, Inc. and leading authority in the Philippines on emotional intelligence, will discuss "Coaching and Counselling Skills (Workplace Setting)." This presentation will cover the difference between coaching and counselling, and when and when not to use them. She will also discuss the steps in conducting coaching and counselling, and its expected outcomes.

On Nov. 13, Tita Datu Puangco, president of Ancilla Enterprise Development Consulting, Inc. and popular columnist of People at Work, will talk about "Strategic Thinking Tools for Managers." The talk will provide an overview of the latest thinking in strategy management and implementation.

The November run is made possible by the companies who care for people at work: Inquirer's Job Market and Job Market Online, INQ7 Interactive Inc., ABS-CBN Publishing's Metro Working Mom, Edsamail Philippines, Career Systems, Inc., Equitable PCI Bank, Adobo Interactive, Ancilla Enterprise Development Consulting, Inc., Impact Strategic Consulting Services, Single Search Philippines, Office1 Superstore, Designer Blooms and Mt. Carmel Printing Press.

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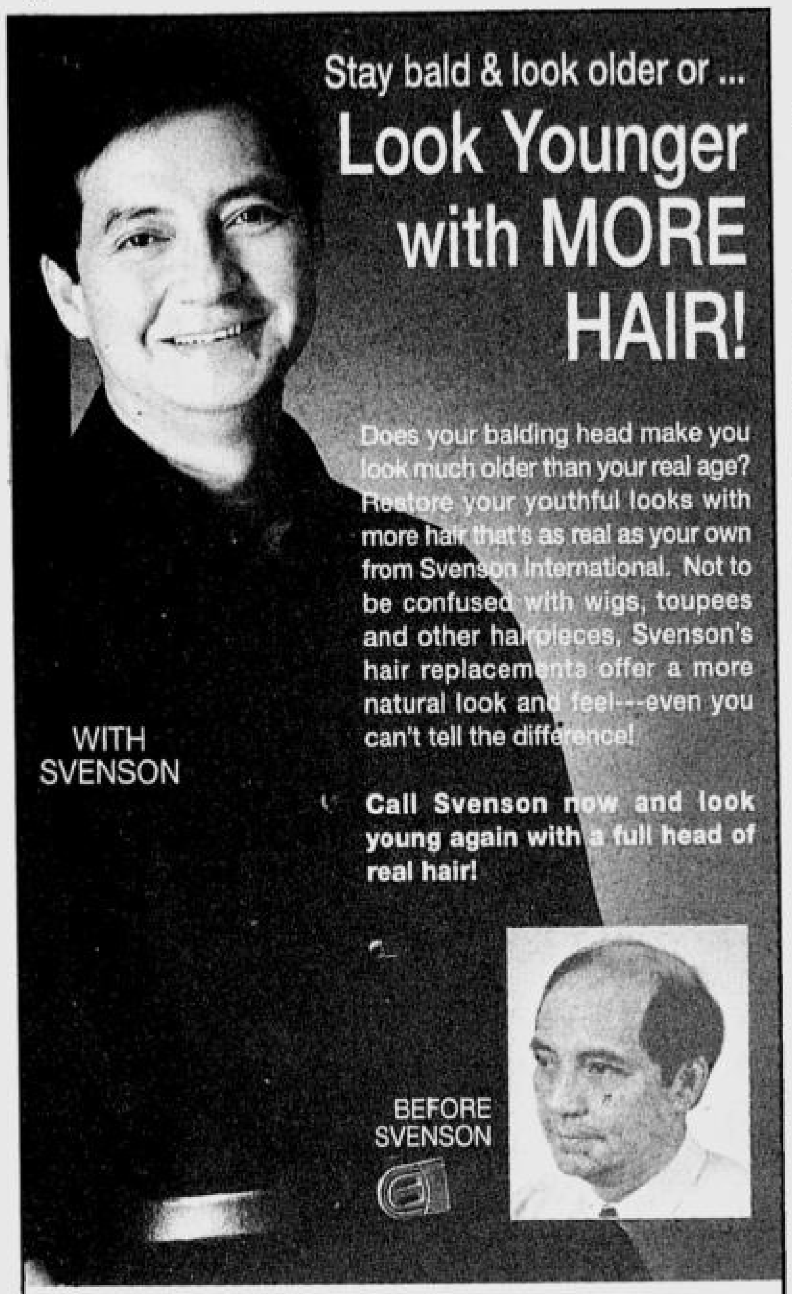
email: peopleatwork@inquirer.com.ph

PEOPLE at WORK

Editor Raul O. Marcelo ● Subsection Editor Regina Galang Reyes



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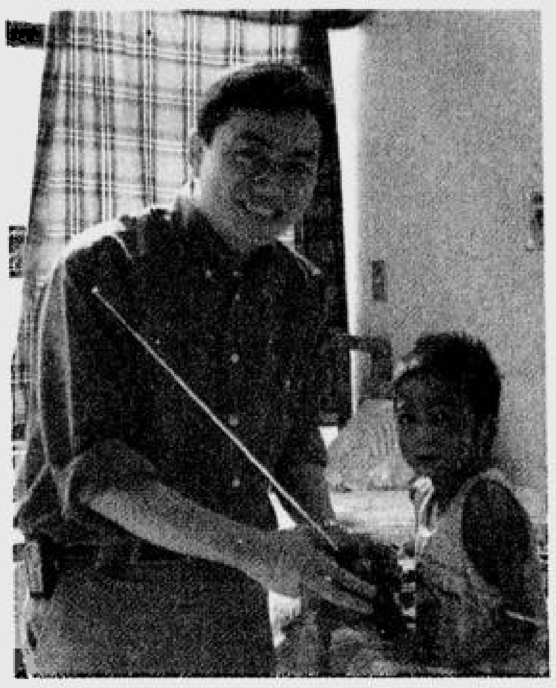
'We can't save the world but we can save kids'

CAREER TALES

By Blanche S. Rivera

WHEN James Philip Cruz ventured into his career in medicine, he had no idea he was going to be a social worker, a hospital boy, a public relations man and an entrepreneur as well. Cruz, chief resident of the Philippine General Hospital pediatric ward, had only wanted to be a doctor for kids, nothing more, nothing less.

His fascination with children and frequent trips to the pediatrician when he was young shaped this vision of him in a white robe. What he did not see, however, was the difficult and stressful picture of a doctor in a government hospital battling not just diseases but poverty. Cruz, 30, has spent four years with the PGH pediatric department. Immediately after graduating from UP Manila, Cruz served at the PGH, where he was appointed chief resident last December.



Giving life

"It's different when you know you're in the place where you have to be, where you know you are needed," Cruz says in an interview at his PGH office, which is cluttered with boxes of medicines, portfolios and donations for the indigent patients.

Cruz is the man behind Give A Life project, which is where his unofficial careers as an entrepreneur and a pubic relations man begin. The project is meant to raise funds for the PGH pediatric ward, which is destitute for facilities. As advocate of the project, Cruz approaches possible donors through e-mails, infomercials, and personal meetings to make them aware of the

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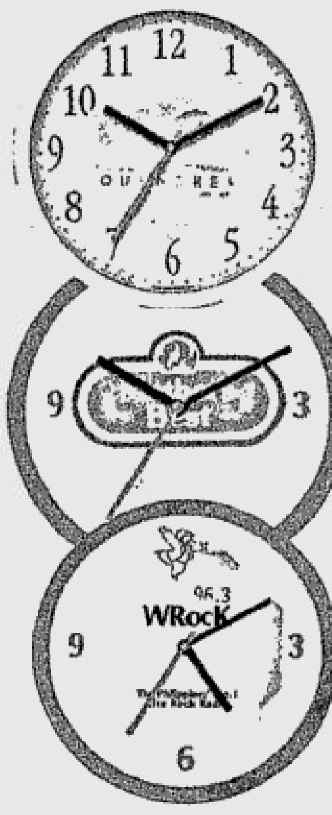

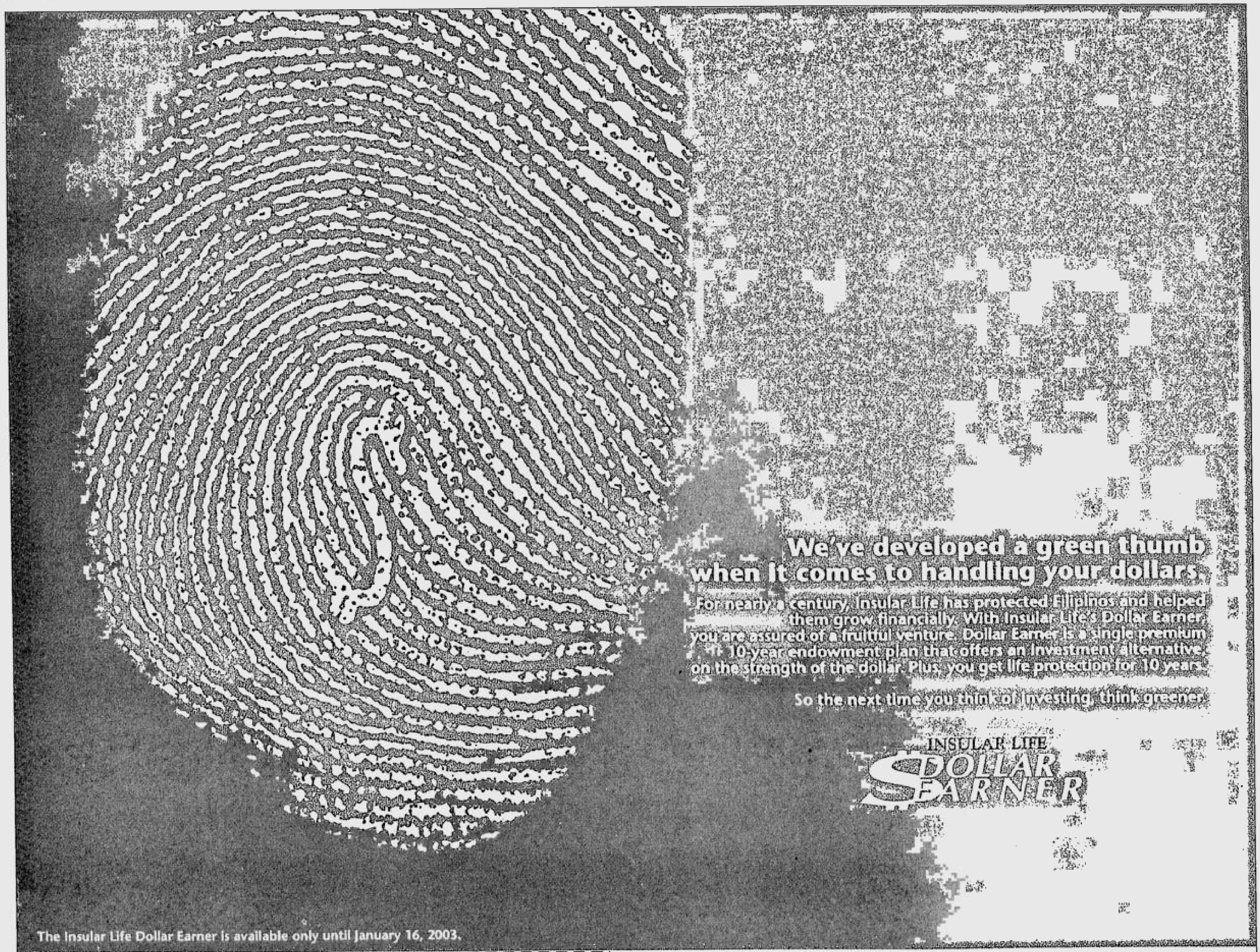

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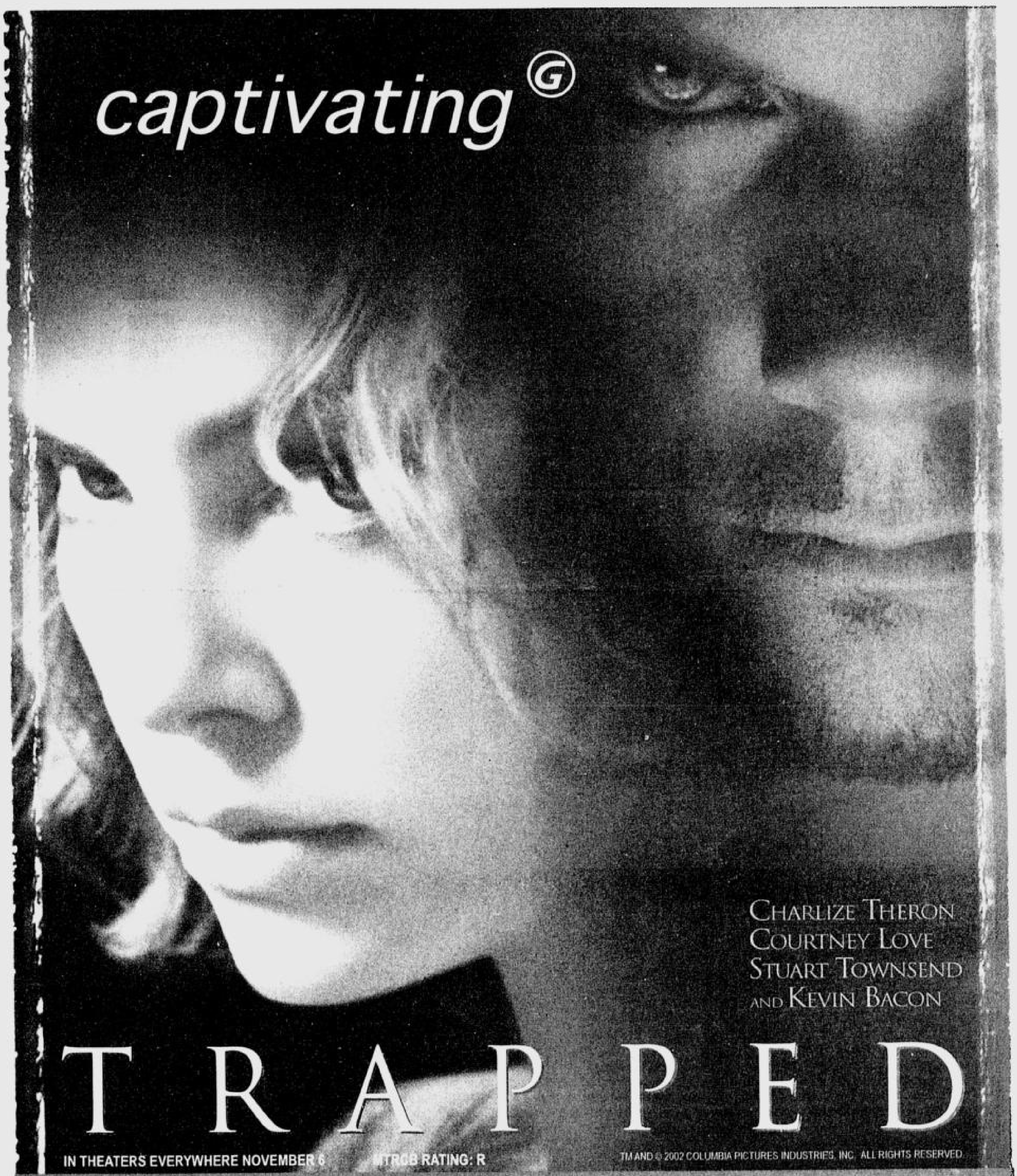
2bU! comes out of the closet to give you the lowdown on the happy gay scene—the icons, the hangouts, the lifestyle, the looks, the vocabulary, the pet peeves and everything in-between



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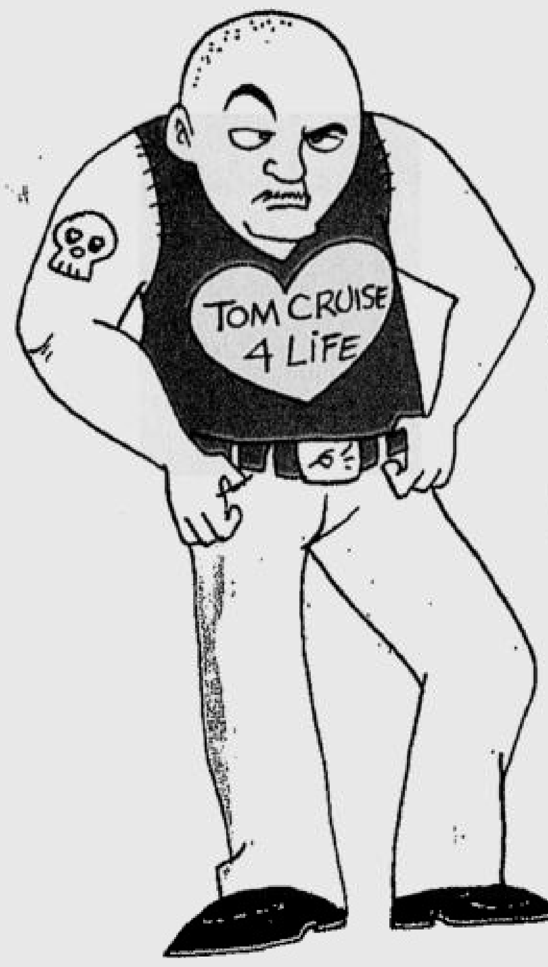
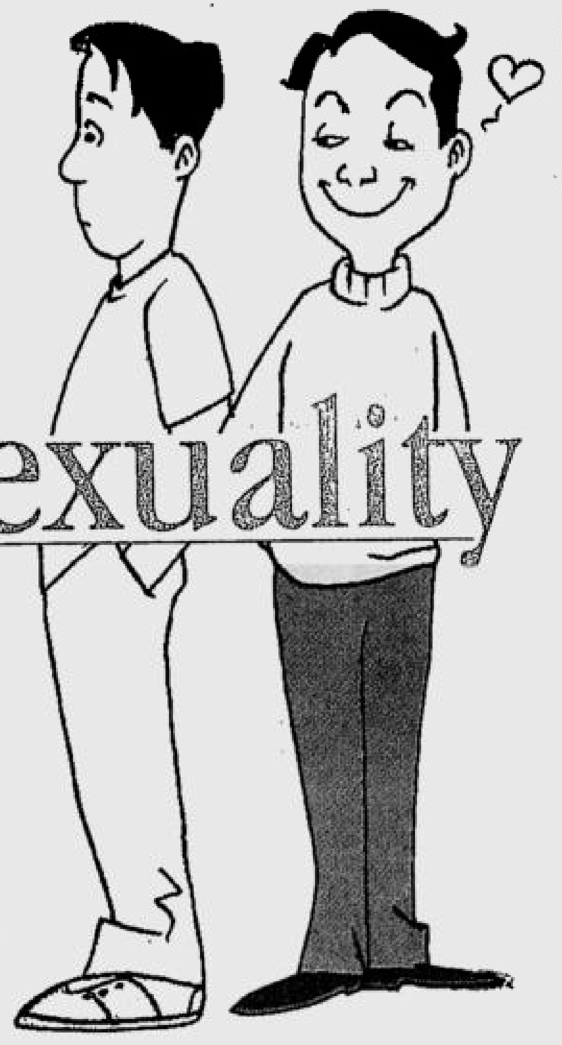
Shades of homosexuality





ILLUSTRATIONS: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

By Niño Mark M. Sablan
2bU! Correspondent

IT'S breathtaking, both for the queer and the so-called straights, how a drool-worthy, muscular, athletic, smart, witty, humorous (not to mention perfect) man can turn out to be gay. There is this Neanderthal notion that only the female-looking, female-sounding, female-acting and female-feeling men are considered gay. But sorry to burst your bubbles, narrow-minded beings, Inday Garutay and Ru Paul aren't the only homosexual men around.

There are straight-acting and straight-looking gay men out there. They're so many you cannot count or distinguish them from the average straight guys.

Homosexuality, like any other label, is limiting, restricting, deceiving, misleading. Despite the common denominators, not all gay men are the same. The stereotype may be very visible and popular, but it doesn't mean that all gay men are precisely like the stereotype. The fact that there is a stereotype means there are other kinds.

Homosexuality is more than just a rainbow. There may be a couple of outstanding types, but some people simply turn out to be of mixed shades. Here are some recognizable types.

Great Pretender

Locally known as *'paminta'* (*pa*-men, understand?), the GP is feminine, trying to conceal his girly side by putting on male clothes. The GP may not be brave enough to go drag, and receives orbital eyebrows from fellow queers who passionately subscribe to the commercial slogan, "*Magpakatotoo ka,* brother (or sister, whatever the case)." It is important to note though that some GPs aren't all that pretentious. They just don't purchase skirts and are actually best little boys in the world.

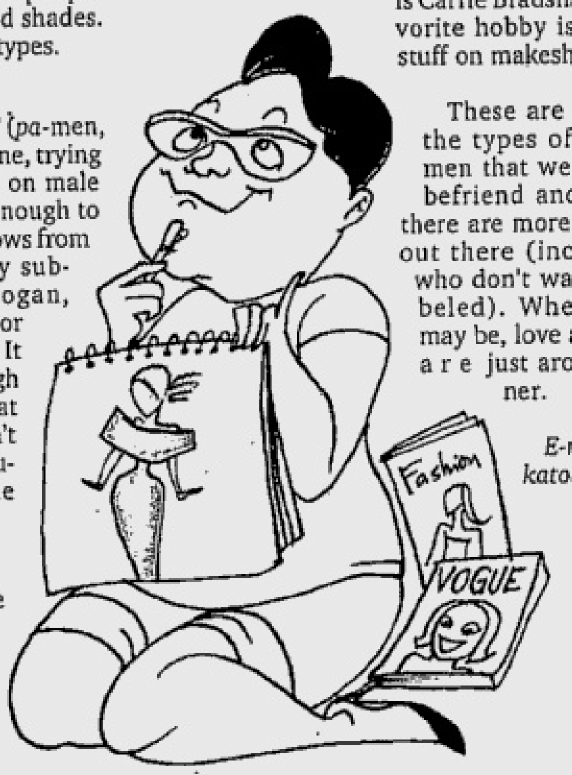
The Diva

Stereotypically portrayed as the loud and hilarious character on TV and in the movies, she usually has lots of hair (super-straight, as curly as Felicity's, colored, etc.), Caronia-tipped fingers and the best painted face in the neighborhood. The diva may have an Adam's apple but to her, every cell of her body is female, caps-locked. The diva also loves beauty—she spends countless hours beautifying herself, prettifies other people, has an eye for beauty and is beautiful no matter what other people say.

BLAH
BLAH
BLAH

Little Miss Loudmouth

Opinionated and always armed with a mouthful of remarks and reactions, this type is usually the life of any gathering, party or not. His memory is leaking with green jokes, hilarious stories, fresh gossips and passionate criticisms—and he divulges every bit of what's inside his mind. Sometimes, though, his animated delivery, annoying tone and uncontrolled volume attract orbital eyebrows and rolling eyeballs.



Fashion Victim

This FTV fanatic pores over stacks of fashion magazines but doesn't stop there. He dresses according to the latest of trends and even doodles designs he hopes to see on the glossy pages of fashion mags someday. His heroine is Carrie Bradshaw and his favorite hobby is to strut his stuff on makeshift catwalks.

Little Limpwrist

Meek, soft-spoken and shy, the little limpwrist usually has a limp wrist. Displaying almost no interest in manly topics and activities (basketball, car-racing), his interests lean on baking cookies and brownies, watching beauty pageants and secretly brushing his sister's Hollywood Barbie.

Best Little Boys in the World

(a.k.a. the straight-acting and straight-looking type). He may not don floral-designed clothes or eternally dig everything pink, but he is really queer—he likes, loves and lives for men!

The Parent

Usually the eldest in a striving family, this benevolent type finishes school with flying colors and without any delay, and gets a great job. Forgetting himself in the process, this dutiful son never fails to give financial assistance to his parents, and becomes a parent himself when he sends siblings to school.

These are just some of the types of homosexual men that we see, laugh at, befriend and love. I'm sure there are more unnamed kinds out there (including those who don't want to be labeled). Wherever they may be, love and laughter are just around the corner.

E-mail the author at katotino@yahoo.com

Fine-tuning your 'gaydar'

By Margot Aissa C. Tan
2bU! Correspondent

IS my boyfriend gay? If you've been asking this question to yourself, then it's time you take a closer look at the man you're head-over-heels in love with. For all you know, he may not be the boyfriend he thinks he is.

Some studies have shown that more than 50 percent of gays and lesbians are still hiding inside the closet—this includes those who don't even know it themselves. Translation? They're gay and they're in denial. This leads us to the men who trap themselves in heterosexual relationships in an effort to conceal their natural leanings. When push comes to shove, who knows who'll get hurt —when their true colors show, it always ends in a blow-up-in-your-face type of thing.

It is sad how, in more ways than one, our society remains to be repressive, restrictive, judgmental and, admit it, homophobic. Thus, the queer babies of our generation end up compromising their true selves and the people around them due to their defensive act of denial. It can lead to depression, anxiety, isolation, paranoia and God knows what other psychological problems life throws their way, which probably explains why gays make up one-third of the suicide rate.

Based on conversations with shrinks, interviews with gay men and heterosexual friends from both sides of the fence, I have collated a list of things to watch out for when your "gaydar" starts to blink like Christmas lights. Of course, these are not the only factors to consider. In the final analysis, it is only he who can tell you if the person behind such macho image would love to take off your dress... so he can wear it *himself*.

He's handsome, a true stud muffin slash babe, *este* gay magnet.

He looks at gay men with disdain/scorn. His extreme homophobic character arises because he sees the same qualities of gays in himself, and thinks that if he speaks out about how much he hates their qualities he just might start to believe it himself.

He's very careful not to look gay. Some men sleep around with lots of women and keep a list of names and numbers in their wallets, or change girlfriends as often as they change their Backstreet Boys tight shirts, pretending to have an overzealous interest in the opposite sex. This is what you call "overcompensating." To make sure they are not perceived as gay or bisexual, these men will act extremely masculine to be the opposite of the gay male stereotype, which is effeminate.

He's very competitive, especially with you!

He's sweet, mothers like him. They say he's the best man you have ever dated.

He tucks in his shirt. The better his fashion sense, the better are his odds of being gay. Do the colors look good together or did he just grab whatever shirt is available? Themes indicate excellent fashion sense.

He splashes on baby cologne. In fact, he acts like a baby when he makes *lambing*.

He loves to eat bananas.

He appreciates good cuisine immensely and does not eat like there's no tomorrow.

He's not good with commitment.

He goes to the parlor to have his hair cut. His hair is sacred.

He has a relative who's gay.

He has clean nails.

He doesn't like getting wet whenever it rains.

There have been instances when you've caught him humming, lip-synching and, yes, singing in falsetto.

He does not appreciate hip-hop, rap, techno or trance.

He overanalyzes. He thinks and rethinks a lot about conversations made, from what he said, what others said, and what he thinks others are *really* thinking and saying.

He doesn't have a lot of guy friends. In truth, he's pretty much a loner.

He's *not* into cars, car magazines, bars or drinking.

He doesn't find anything weird or awkward about smoking your glamour-length ultra thins.

His libido is grossly high.

He limits his conquests to pretty girls; because where the pretty girls are, the pretty boys are there, too!

Some of the people who know him say he was quite effeminate or was a weak dud as a child. Friends from high school say he was pretty much of a loner when he was a kid.

You're in love with him, and he's in love with himself. He's in a way narcissistic.

He looks at the mirror... a lot. He's v-a-i-n. He spends an inordinate time in the gym; it's one of his top priorities. He doesn't work out to train for any sport whatsoever, but he just simply wants to look good. He also has this thing about "developing his chest." He gives a lot of importance on his appearances.

He has neat handwriting.

He's very careful in handling "dirty" objects. He even has alcohol or alcogel conveniently at hand.

You've heard the perennial "*Tumataba na ako, 'noh?*" coming out of his mouth.

He's very meticulous with his face. "There's something wrong with my eyebrows... *'kakainis talaga 'tong* pimple..."

You're walking casually around the mall, and he would frequently comment on the clothing and physique of passing men and women. It could be as innocuous a comment as "*Lumalaki na ang katawan ni Bill, ah.*"

He's into women performers, or male singers who sound like women (oldies tunes).

He's been into the grappling phase, or anything that's similar to it as wrestling and other contact sports. Think of men rolling around on mats, sweaty, grunting...

It doesn't bother him that he drinks your fruity cocktails.

He knows the right brands.

Does he walk like he's way too happy about life to be straight? Where are his hands? Do they end up on his hips a lot? Does he cross his legs a lot?

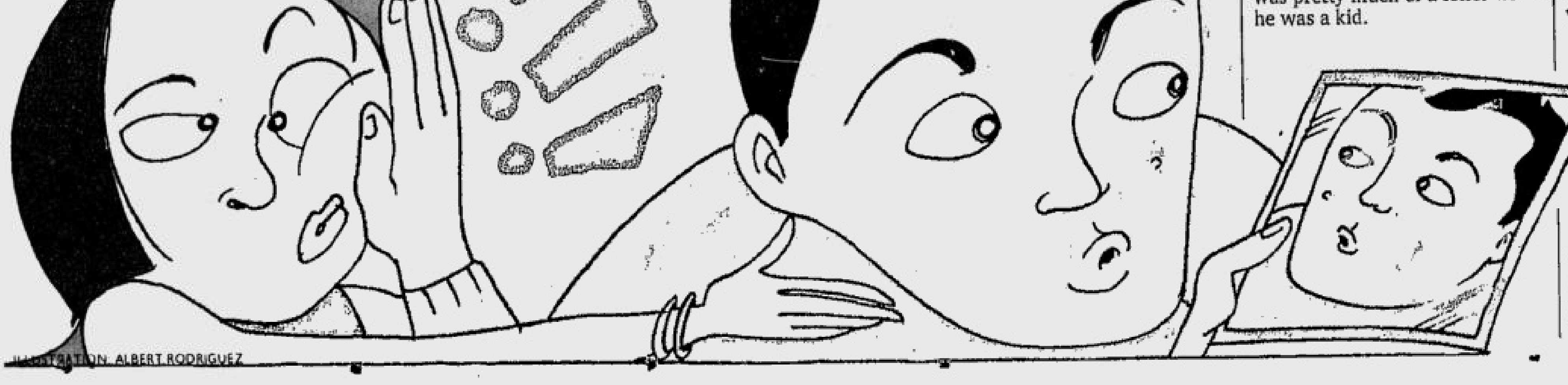
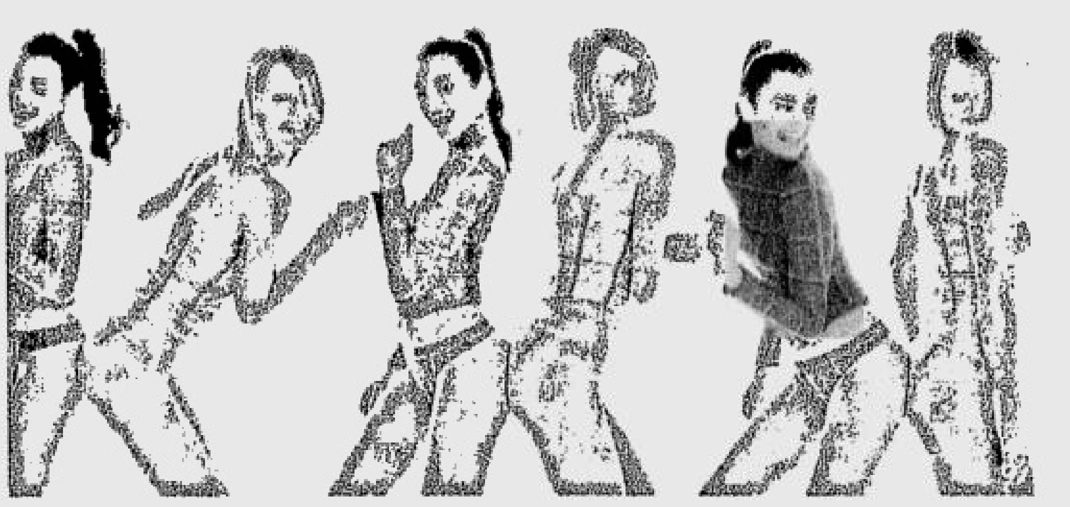


ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

Stylish and colorful undergarments for young ladies



BENETTON has launched its Undercolors of Benetton, the latest addition to the Benetton group carrying the trendy undergarments line for young ladies.

Undercolors of Benetton is a result of Benetton's constant attention to changing trends as well as the company's aim to add color and a dynamic dimension to everyday life. Thus, the new product line is young, stylish and, most of all, colorful—a trademark of this popular Italian brand.

The Undercolors product mix includes undergarments, swimwear, sleepwear and active wear for teens and ladies, primarily those in the 13-35 age group.

The collection is a cross between underwear and outerwear, between under and over, so full of fashion ideas it's a shame to hide them. It is composed of three themed groups: Manager, Romantiko and Ironico, and Basico, that can be worn on their own or imaginatively matched to items from other groups.

For a dynamic yet very sophisticated look, Manager features bold pinstriped fabrics in dark tones softened by ecru lace trimming for bras, briefs, push-ups, slips, baby dolls and suspender belts. Nightwear includes strappy nightdresses, crossover pajamas and seductive bed jackets in pure or blended silk.

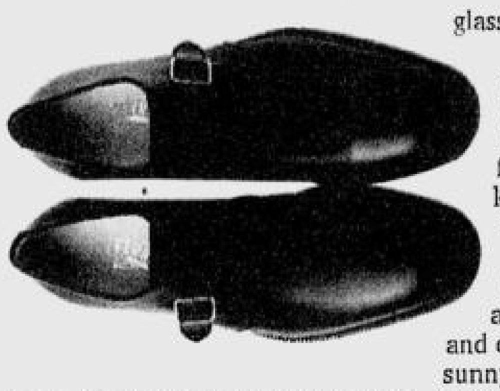
Romantico is the delicate feminine line featuring floral-embroidered mesh, floral jacquard polyamide, ribs, cables and scalloped borders in matching sets, slips, vest tops, briefs and strings in pale pink, light blue and cream. Sleepwear comes in pajamas or long jersey or microfleece nightdresses decorated with the mascot for this line: A rabbit-shaped ball of wool that hops everywhere.

Ironico is informal, with strong colors matched to form sharp contrasts or as trims—yellow, pink, light blue—with lots of ideas for homewear and nightwear. Underwear is available in seamless fabric, jersey, cotton pique; sweatshirts of various weights, fleece and cotton for pajamas. Fun and irony comes in the form of '50s-style comic strip prints, such as Lollypop in a beauty parlor environment.

Undercolors of Benetton also carries Basico, a wide assortment of underwear models and styles: Shorts, briefs, trunks, strings; strapless, triangle-cup, preformed and push-up bras. The set comes in a range of colors, from pale pastels to autumnal tints and from neutral to shocking shades.

Available at Rustan's Makati, Rustan's Shangri-La Plaza Mall and Rustan's Alabang Town Center, Undercolors of Benetton is distributed in the Philippines by Rustan Marketing Corp.

New Age wardrobe for golden boys



A NEW pleasure in great classic styles and the great vintage/New Age wardrobe are what the Fall 2002 Menswear collection of Salvatore Ferragamo is all about. This season, the Italian fashion house is insured by the man who goes around town in day and night club classics, like soft grays and sharp blue. Fresh sky-blue shirts make fine canvases for his fine silk ties. Chalk stripe suits go along with chalk-stripe knits. To finish the look, black shiny leather for the slim, perfect shoes. Easy dressy ascetic chic is one of the looks of Ferragamo's golden boys for fall.

The label also encourages fashionable men to hit the town in brown and green, lacquer red, silky lining and quilted warmers. A park walk is not complete without feather-weight coats in soft couture cut. Tailor-cut winter khakis are topped with suede and knit-zipper jackets, or chunky tweedy sweaters. Double stitches, leather buttons, cashmere and silk complete the ingredients of an uptown and country outfit.

The jet-setting guy, says Ferragamo, for fall, goes yachting in deep navy blues with a cashmere pea coat, or a wool and leather duffle coat. A high energy of blazers red and New Wave cool white makes a big crew neck fisherman knit stand out. Pair these with black and blue boating shoes, waterproof bags and sailing glasses for the wide ocean winds.

Western boots for the country life in silent snow paired with a great outdoor parka is perfect for the Sundance Kids. Polar fleece, travel blankets, plaid knits and poncho scarf coats are ultra light and ultra soft.

Finally, our golden boy wears bright light, silver grays and powder blues, pale oranges and cold yellow. Chalet chic fun for sunny boars. Stardust memories in soft suede suits.

House parties are never the same without cashmere T-shirts and supple slippers.

A fashion New Age has indeed come for the Ferragamo golden boys.

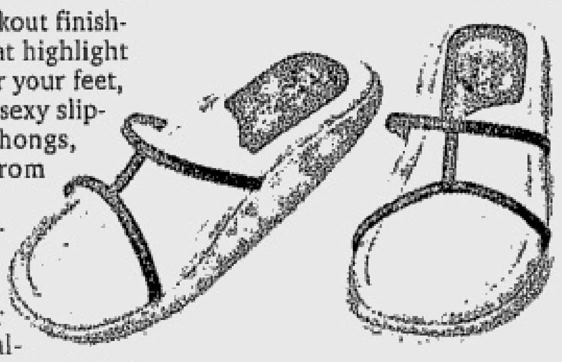
Stores Specialists Inc. is the exclusive franchise holder for Salvatore Ferragamo. Shops are located at Power Plant Mall Rockwell Center; Greenbelt 1 Ayala Center; Alabang Town Center; Rustan's Tower, Makati and Cebu.

Make malling or running pleasurable

GIVE your outfits a knockout finishing touch with shoes that highlight your hip style and flatter your feet, like any of the new and sexy slip-ons, sandals, wedges, thongs, half-shoes and boots from Francesco.

The modern shoe options that offer incredible value for money not just for style but also for functionality are appealing for today's more casual lifestyles. Suitable for today's young and mobile trendsetters who are always on the lookout for sensible buys, Francesco footwear spells good taste and practicality. With Francesco, malling, running and trekking—in the neighborhood or in school—becomes a pleasurable affair. What's cool about Francesco shoes are its finest quality leather uppers and lining, along with some selections in denim and other quality materials. Francesco shoes also come with various polyurethane sole innovations.

Give your feet the thoroughly modern, eye-catchingly chic quality footwear they deserve, and get the top picks for weekend and campus wear from Francesco boutiques, located at Glorietta 2, Ayala Center, Makati City; 3/L SM Megamall Building B, Mandaluyong City; Robinsons Galleria, Ortigas Avenue, Pasig City; Upper G/F Alabang Town Center, Alabang, Muntinlupa City; and SM City Bacoor, Cavite City.



FRANCESCO slip-ons in red leather T-strap with the new double sole innovation

Casual wear store dresses up youth for 15 years

INDIVIDUALITY has always been a major factor that shapes the fashion style of every Filipino youth. Dressing up beyond the basic need for clothing is a statement, an expression, a celebration of one's individuality.

For 15 years, Bobson, a brand of quality clothing, has offered young fashionistas with trendy denims and stylish casual apparel for both men and women. Since Crolific Garments Mfg. launched Bobson in 1987, it continues to mirror the youth's passion for self-expression and casual living, unhampered by conventional fashion.

Bobson debuted as a concession for SM Manila in 1989, and entered Robinsons Department Store a year after. From then on, Bobson continued to expand, rapidly conquering major department stores nationwide and operating more than 100 outlets.

Bobson's men's apparel offers a broad line of denims, knits and other accessories. Available in trendy colors and creative print designs, the casual wear is ideal for cool and rugged men who value quality and affordability. Bobson also carries teenwear that feature bright and funky collections of blouses, skirts, capris and pants.

The latest offering of Bobson is the edgy D2: Deconstructed Denims. Redefining the concept of denim, Bobson utilized the most advanced technology and design to give D2 denims a distinct look.

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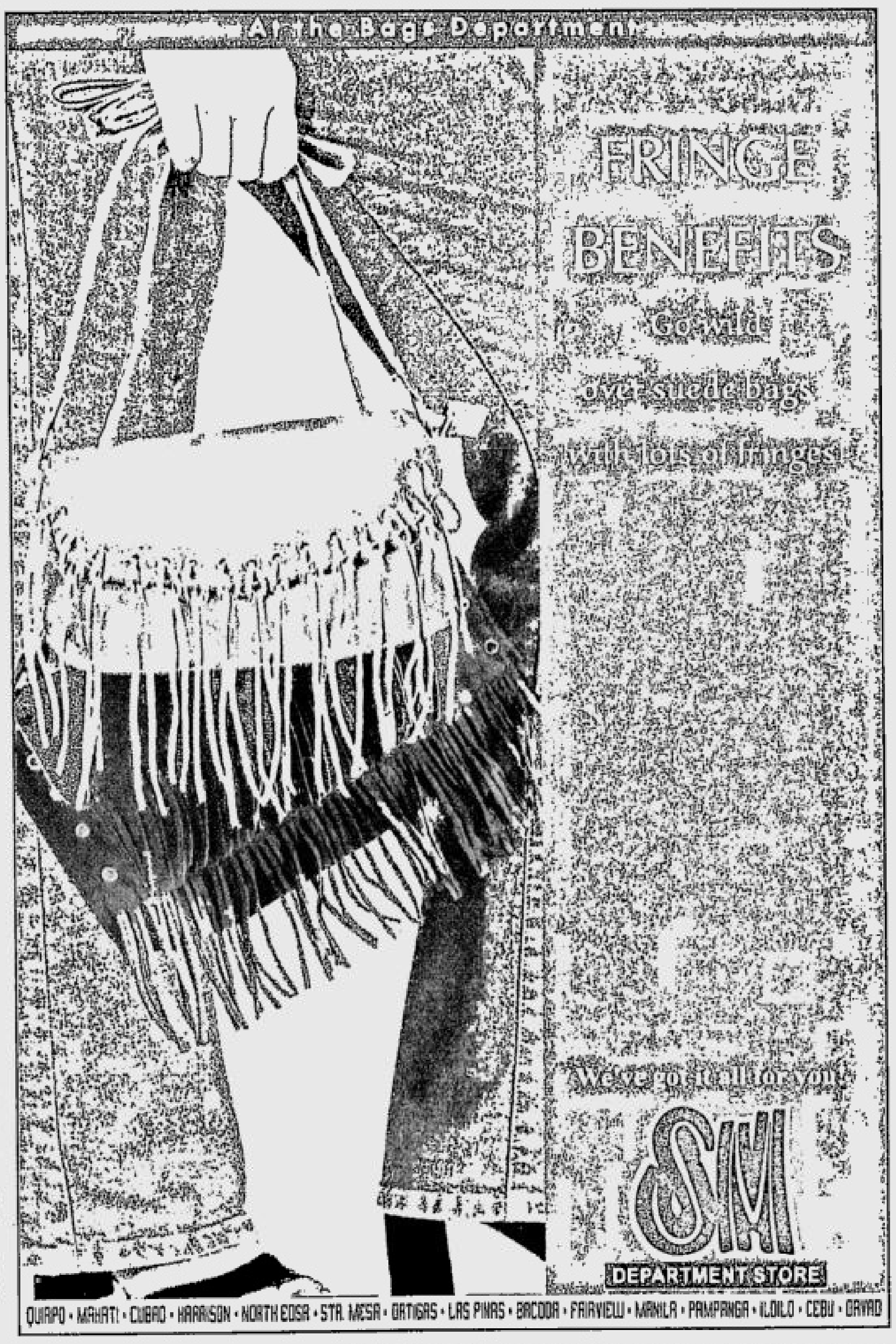
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Beauty must-haves: From body scrubs to pore reducers

What to use for that nightly beauty ritual? Or that day out in the sun? What if you want to hide a flaw but still show some skin? Our resident 'kikay' has the answers

Vanity Fare

Lora Gabol

REMEMBER kindergarten? Every day was filled with oatmeal cookies and boxes of Crayola. Apart from the occasional bully who'd steal your lunch and beat you to your school bus seat, life was free of any major crisis. Fast forward to the present day, where oatmeal is a beauty ingredient more than food and the only painting you do is on your face... My, we sure have gone a long way since our ABCs.

Just look at all the things that are available in the market to help us keep our skin and hair looking good. There's no longer a simplistic approach to lifestyle—much less to beauty. Here's a guide to help you sort out the must-haves from the never-minds.

Skin care

Bummed by dullness and rough patches on your skin? Creams and lotions with alpha hydroxy acids are here to the rescue! This mild chemical exfoliant sweeps away coarse skin cells while adding a boost of brightness to an otherwise lackluster complexion. For that healthy, luminous look, add **Neutrogena Radiance Essence** to your nightly beauty ritual.

The sun is fast becoming the *kikay*'s worst nemesis, so find a good UV protection to keep those rays from turning you into a prune. For maximum protection, shield yourself with the SPF 70 of **Hawaiian Tropic Ozone**.

After abusing our skin during the day, it deserves special care at night. Use a skin repairing cream to work its tricks while you snooze, and wake up to a better complexion in the morning. **Nivea White Night Repair** reverses any damage done while clearing skin of discoloration and dark spots.

Body scrubs are the secret to smooth, glowing skin. Go the extra mile in the shower with **The Body Shop's Soya and Quinoa Body Scrub** or **Origins' Salt Scrub**, or go for the more reasonably priced **St. Ives Apricot Scrub** for a relaxing rub-a-dub-dub.

Tea has many health and beauty properties. More than a drink, tea is a wonder ingredient for beauty concoctions that promise antioxidant action. Green tea has been in the limelight for some time now, but it has been discovered that white tea also shows results. Enjoy the benefits of white tea with **Origins' A Perfect World Skin Guardian**.

A classic dresser must-have, **Vaseline Petroleum Jelly** is the mother of multi-taskers. A moisturizer/makeup remover/hair balm etc., this hardworking product deserves to be in the hall of fame of beauty by now.

Even when we're far from any real depressions on our faces, prevention is still better than cure. Retinol is considered an effective youth potion that helps reduce pore size and keeps fine lines from appearing. Consider **Neutrogena Pore Refining Essence** your ally in beating aging even before it starts.

Whitening no longer means bleaching your skin three tones lighter than it really is. Modern whitening is more concerned with evening out skin color and clearing up dark spots. The **Nivea Whitening Range** offers affordable yet effective brightening products. Also try **Neutrogena Fine Fairness Essence** for intensive action on discolorations.

Clearing up

Once puberty kicks in, the oil factories within our skin go into overdrive, causing a chain of skin problems like acne and the common mirror ball complexion. Keep sebum production at bay with an oil-controlling regimen like **Clean and Clear** and **L'Oreal Pure Matte** (both include a cleanser, toner/astringent, and moisturizer).

Never pick blackheads, unless you want permanent craters on your nose. Use a pore strip instead. Try the ones from **Pond's** or **Biore**, or grab a tube of **Acmedica's Sebum Removing Pack** for maximum unplugging power.

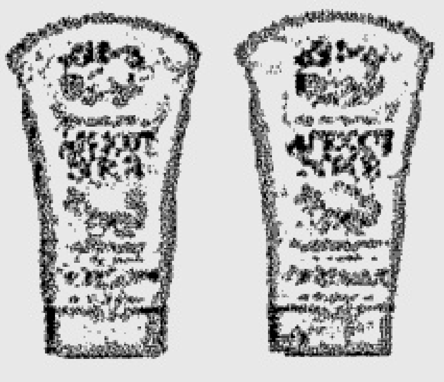
DEEP CLEAN
DEEP CLEAN

Pimples will forever be the bane of every *kikay*'s existence. Manage those bumps by using a zit treatment on acne-prone areas and breakouts. **Neutrogena Clear Pore** prevents future breakouts with salicylic acid, while the entire **Clinique Anti-Blemish Solutions** line tackles the problem in five steps. **Stiefel's Acne Aid Bar** in synergy with **PanOxyl Acnegel** has worked wonders on many a blemished complexion with its benzoyl peroxide content.

Hiding imperfections

Forget stage makeup and that old-fashioned pancake. Modern formulations of foundation are all about hiding imperfections while showing skin. **L'Oreal AirWear** and **Maybelline Pure Stay** provide just enough coverage without looking mask-like, while the custom-made foundations of **Prescriptives** make it impossible for the wrong shade to turn up in your *kikay* kit.

The easiest way to sexify your pucker is by piling on the gloss. A wet-looking mouth could have just as much impact as a scarlet kisser, so stock up on my current fave, **Maybelline Fruity Jelly Lip Gloss**—it turns up your sex appeal without looking too made up. **MAC LipGlass**, on the other hand, comes in the yummiest shades to complement every makeup look imaginable.



Perfect skin is practically a myth in this world of pollution, stress and hormonal imbalance. Blemishes, uneven skin tone and under-eye circles are lesser burdens with the help of a concealer. The best in my book by far is **Laura Mercier's Secret Camouflage**, which comes in two yellow-toned shades you can blend for the perfect disguise. For the budget-conscious, however, **The Body Shop's Everyday Concealer** does just as good a job without breaking the bank.

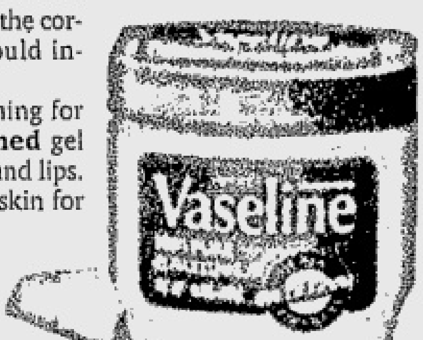
Years of being a crybaby and insomniac are beginning to take a toll on my eye area. There are days I wake up with dark circles even Frankenstein never dreamt of having. I know eye cream shouldn't even be in my vocabulary until I'm 25, but my nasty habits tell me otherwise. I love **L'Oreal Hydrafresh Eye Gel**, a light, refreshing gel that cools the eye area instantly after application.

Healthy flush

A healthy flush easily transforms a tired face by giving the illusion of blood under the skin—exactly why no girl should be caught without blush in her beauty supply. Whether in cream, liquid, gel or powder form, the correct shade for your skin tone could instantly wake up your face.

These days, I find myself reaching for **Herbench Pretty When Pinched** gel blush, a sexy red stain for cheeks and lips. Tip: Apply blush on moisturized skin for easy blending.

While waiting for your alpha hydroxy potion to do its magic, fake the luminosity with the help of illuminating makeup. **The Body Shop's Glow Enhancer** has light-reflecting particles that deliver temporary brightness to any skin tone. For more coverage without sacrificing radiance, try Vitamin C-rich **L'Oreal Translucide**.



If **Johnson's Baby Cream** is good enough for baby, then it must be good for you. Try it as an alternative to regular moisturizer when all you need is mild and gentle hydration. For day, try **Kiss My Face Tinted Moisturizer with SPF**, a light base for when our tropical weather wouldn't cooperate with regular foundation.

Hair

Dry hair is ugly hair. 'Nuff said. Keep your crowning glory touchably silky with a regular hair treatment you can do at home. **Kerastase's Masquintense** brings you closer to Jennifer Aniston locks, while tried-and-tested **Alberto V05 Hot Oil Shower Works** is a quick fix for a lifeless mane.

The sun and other elements tend to dry out hair and, eventually, cause damage. A leave-on hair moisturizer is just what you need to keep hair hydrated and protected. **Citre Shine Repair Leave-On Conditioner** maintains manageability and shine, even under the sun.

A haggard face is every girl's nightmare. Why live with it when you can arm yourself with a de-stressing arsenal of products. Light a few aromatherapy candles, put on some soothing tunes and slather on **St. Ives Eye and Face Stress Gel** for a quick de-puffing and renewed skin vitality.

Exercise, by all means, still beats luxury beauty products any day. Take time out from piling on those products and just sweat it out! Trivia: Sweat acts as a really effective cleanser.

Tools of the trade

The best makeup brands are no good when applied with the wrong tools. Quality makeup brushes and sponges are needed to give the best results. Splurge on a set by **Shu Uemura** if you can afford it. While you're saving up, go for **HerBench** Brushes in the meantime.

Q-tips are versatile beauty instruments. Smudge your makeup, clean your ears... the list goes on, so make sure you have your supply.

The greater male population has a fetish for clean finger and toenails, so nail care is must. Invest in **Sally Hansen** nail products for affordable yet quality care, or visit the **Nail Spa** at Shangri-La Plaza for a pampering experience for both your digits and your tootsies.

Nivea, L'Oreal, Maybelline, Sally Hansen, Pond's, Biore, Acmedica, Johnson's, Citre Shine, St. Ives and Clean and Clear are available at PCX. Clinique, Prescriptives Shu Uemura and Origins are available at Rustan's. Kiss My Face is available at Beauty Bar. Stiefel products are available at leading pharmacies. For appointments at the Nail Spa, 5/F Shangri-La Plaza, call 687-7011.

E-mail the author at pdi_vanityfare@hotmail.com

She doesn't know how to deal with a jilted suitor

Carlos Garchitorena & September Mahino

DEAR Sep and Caloy,

I had a suitor last summer but I turned him down because I didn't like him. Since then, he and his friends have accused me of being shallow, that I turned him down because of his appearance. To be honest, that is part of the reason.

I tried to explain to him that I find him *ma-angas* (arrogant) sometimes, and I don't like it when he talks loud and tells jokes that aren't funny. But he doesn't listen to me, and a lot of people are now convinced that what he's saying is true.

Even some of my friends ask me if I'd say yes to him if he looked better. I feel guilty but I know that I'm right. Can you tell me how to deal with this?

SQUICKGRRL

How to deal with it? With as few blows to the head as possible. The lowest three mental classifications of people are, from highest to lowest: moron, imbecile and idiot. The worst thing that can happen in the life of an imbecile is to lose a couple of brain cells too many and become an idiot. Don't get me wrong, I mean that in the best possible way.

In the course of your life, it's inevitable that you find people who are unique in their stupidity. These people can't be scorned outright and fed to the lions. Who would fill up the slot in "Balitang K"? Just as the world relies on geniuses to stretch our imagination and desire to empower ourselves with the mind, the world relies on abject dumbness to make the world more... shall we say, random?

We can't all be gifted with rapier-sharp wit, common sense and an appetite for Zen. If we were, then I'd be out of a job Wednesdays! But seriously, can you see why the deviations and the deviants in a society equal in necessity to organization in the ranks of the norm? While that large statistic found in the center (the norm) is self-defining by the limits on its own impulsiveness and irrationality, deviants in a society help define the norm—from the outside. Therefore idiots are the mental version of director Oliver Stone's "Natural Born Killers."

For what would the world be, as you know it here and now, without Tom Hanks' character opposite Joe Friday in "Dragnet"? Who wouldn't miss Harry and Lloyd of "Dumb and Dumber"? Please bear in mind, you honor students and future dean's listers out there, that the smart half of a class of students is only made possible by the half at the bottom.

So exercise patience with idiots. From them, you can learn the balance of the force. I hope that the next time you bump him... I mean bump into him, you're more positive about his existence. Somewhere out there, an imbecile has been moved up to moron. You know, you've got me contemplating the possibility of a new book project inspired by your suitor: "Zen and the Art of Taking a Hint."

CALOY

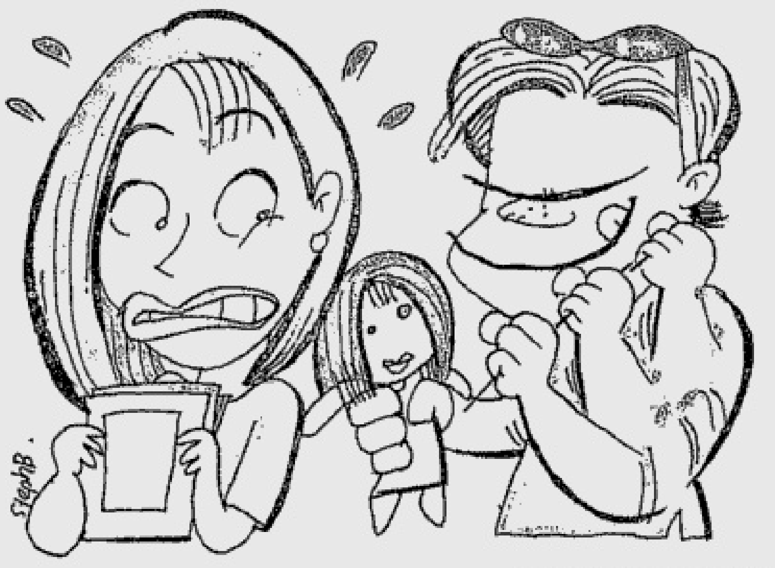


ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

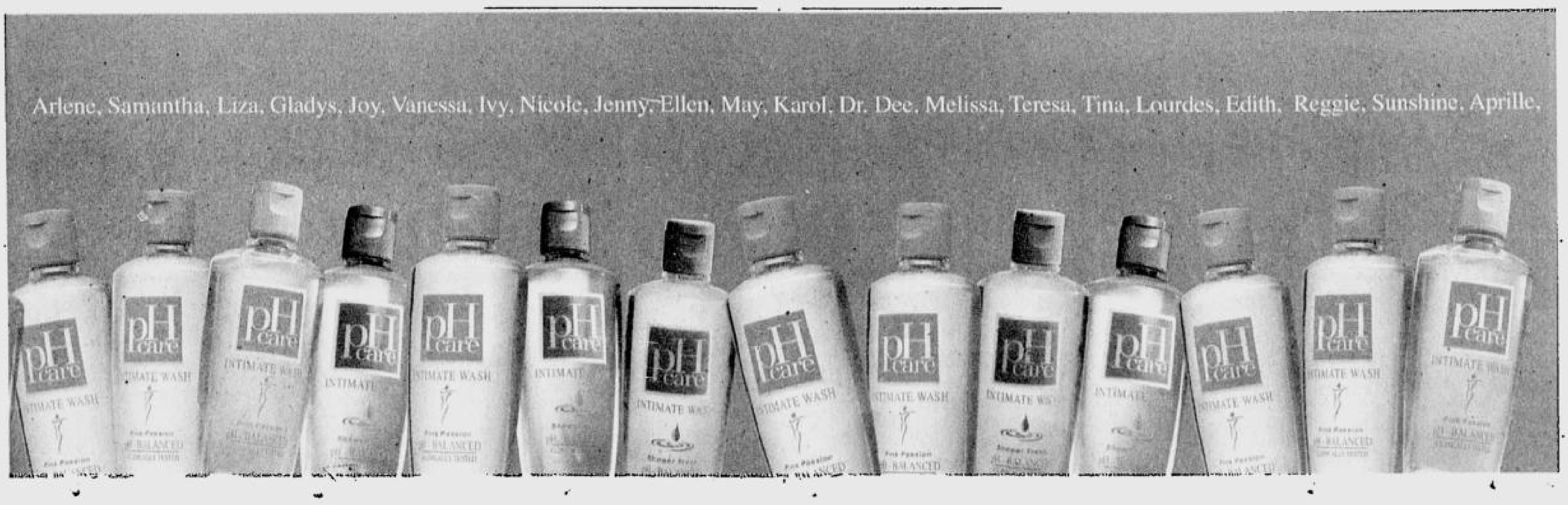
What I would want you to do is whenever the guy accuses you again of being biased, look at him straight in the eye and admit that yes, he's right, you turned him down because he's not good-looking enough, added to that a couple of his personality problems.

The guy has been baiting you for such a long time, and I think it's already okay to break the truth to him. I know you have been trying to do that, but you only say the other reasons that he doesn't want to listen to. If you told him what he has been asking to hear, then he'd have no reason left to pester you, right?

You can do the same thing to his friends, and to some of your friends, for that matter. Ask them why they question your decision when: 1) it was your love life at stake; 2) you have personal preferences, just like everybody else; and 3) people have been judging each other based on appearances for a long time already.

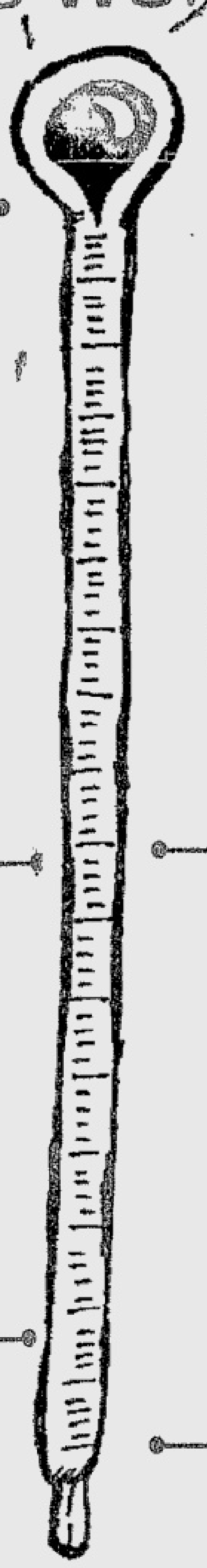
You can feel a little guilty about being appearance-biased, just like the rest of the world, but dumping a suitor is forgivable. Not to mention common and relate-able. If your friends didn't know that or have simply forgotten it, remind them of the times when someone said "Hi" to them only to be completely ignored. That is not so different from what you did to your suitor.

SEP


Arlene, Samantha, Liza, Gladys, Joy, Vanessa, Ivy, Nicole, Jenny, Ellen, May, Karol, Dr. Dee, Melissa, Teresa, Tina, Lourdes, Edith, Reggie, Sunshine, Aprille,
pH care
INTIMATE WASH

THERMOMETER

When being gay means having the best and the worst of both worlds



GAY men and women can hang out with straights without the usual sexual tension. That makes them treasured best friends.

THERE are events to be excited about, like Gay Pride, or every weekend in Malate. Even the lesbians now have a home in LaDida.

YOU get to enjoy the best of both worlds.

PEOPLE turn to you for fashion advice.

THE POWER OF METAMORPHOSIS. Who else can pull off a Madonna or a Diana Ross?

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

SAFE SEX—We always think it can never happen to us, but as Ate Vi says, "You can never can tell."

IN AND OUT—Coming out is perhaps the defining moment in a gay or a lesbian's life. It's the time when we can be open about our relationships while being true to ourselves.

FROM LYNN LAVNER—"The Bible contains six admonishments to homosexuals and 362 admonishments to heterosexuals. That doesn't mean that God doesn't love heterosexuals. It's just that they need more "supervision." Ha!

GAY LINGO—We get to talk about anything anywhere without having to censor ourselves.

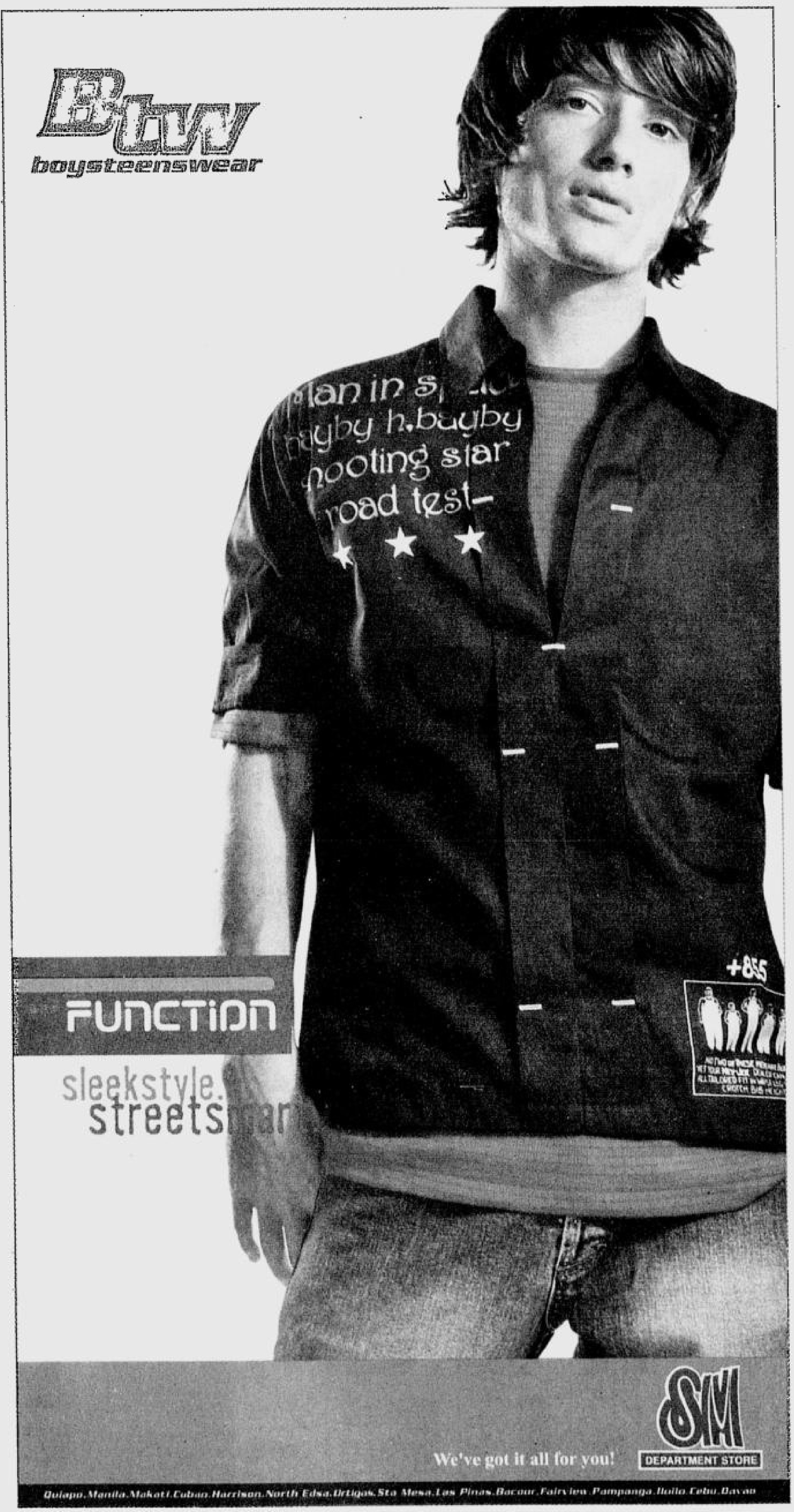
MISS PHILIPPINES NOT MAKING IT TO THE TOP 10—Don't we just hate it when, after waiting for one whole year, our bet doesn't make it to the Miss Universe finals again? This despite the usual pronouncements of the local media that our contestants are always favorites.

HOMO HOBO—It's sad that while gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgendered people lobby for equal rights, there's actually homophobia among them.

IT'S NOT "A GAY"—Gay is an adjective. So, say "he's gay" not "he's a gay," okay?

HOTLEGS IN THE FLESH

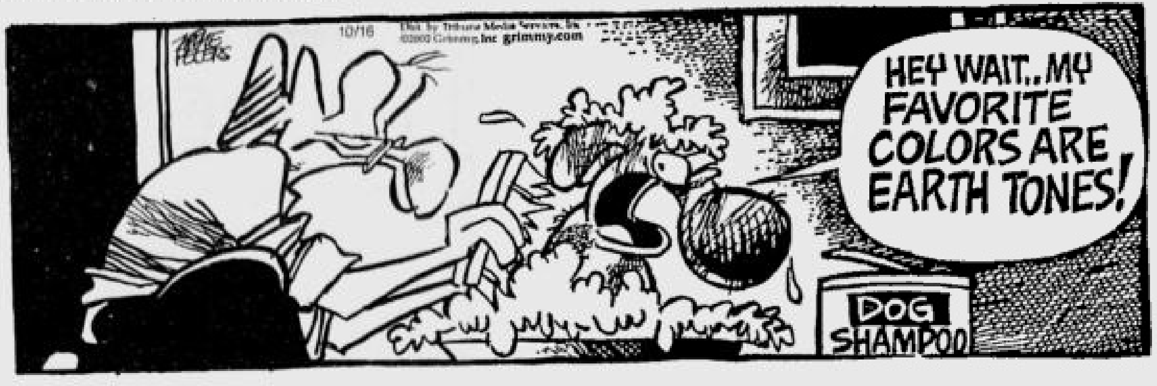
The country's premier dance troupe, Hotlegs, is marking its 21st year with shows on Nov. 5 and 7, 9 p.m., at Greenbelt Onstage. Floy Quintos directs. Tickets are available at National Bookstore's Ticketworld, Robinsons Place and Galleria, Tower Records Makati and Alabang, Ticketron and Greenbelt Onstage box office. TV direction is by Al Quinn.


Btw
boysteenswear
FUNCTION
sleekstyle. streetsmart
We've got it all for you!
SM DEPARTMENT STORE
Quiapo.Manila.Makati.Cubao.Harrison.North Edsa.Ortigas.Sta Mesa.Las Pinas.Bacoor.Fairview.Pampanga.Iloilo.Cebu.Davao

To the multitude of women and doctors who have discovered the new everyday feminine wash
pH care
INTIMATE WASH
maraming, maraming salamat po.
pH care
INTIMATE WASH
pH BALANCED

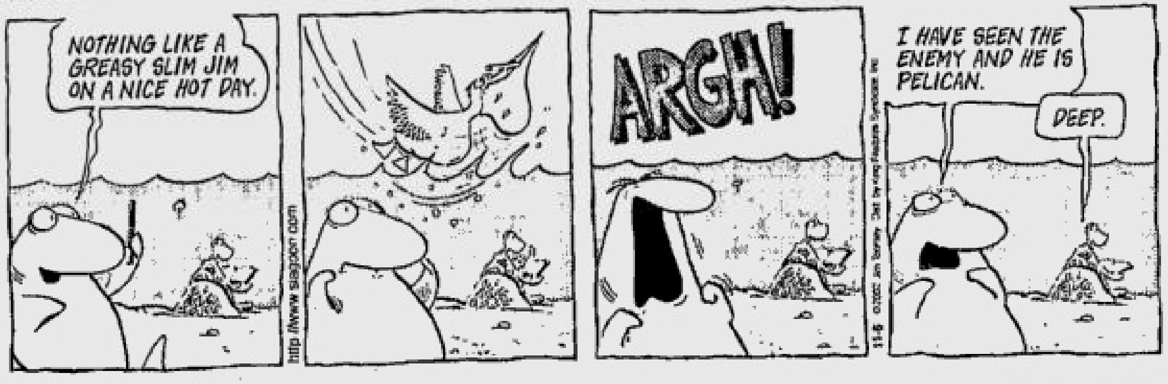
MOTHER GOOSE AND GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


MIKE PETERS
10/16
grimmy.com
HEY WAIT.. MY FAVORITE COLORS ARE EARTH TONES!
DOG SHAMPOO

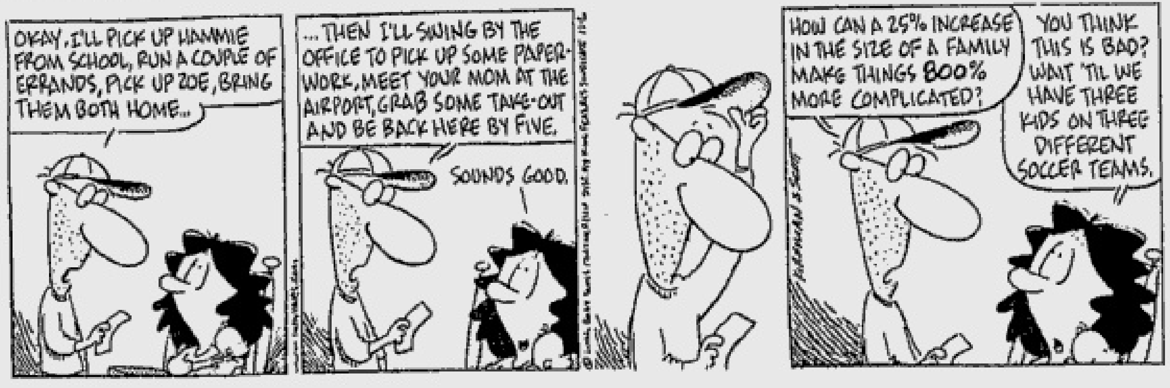
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


NOTHING LIKE A GREASY SLIM JIM ON A NICE HOT DAY.
ARGH!
I HAVE SEEN THE ENEMY AND HE IS PELICAN.
DEEP.
http://www.slagoon.com
11-6

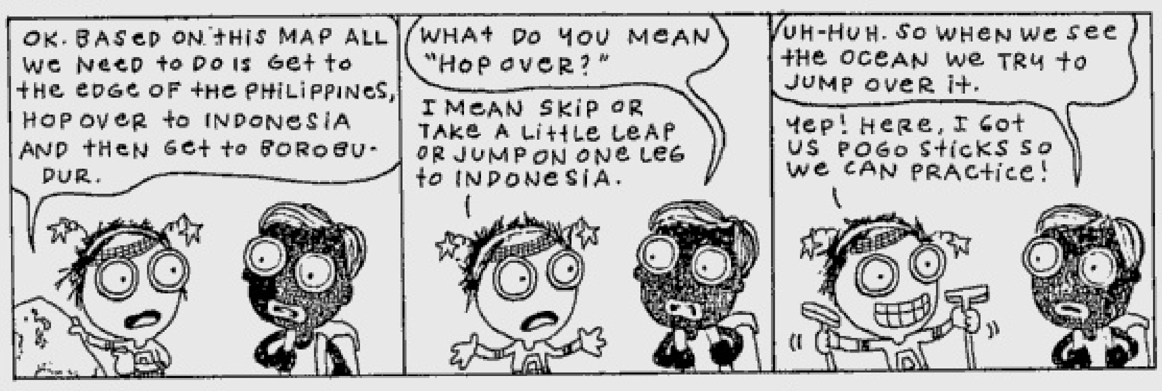
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


OKAY, I'LL PICK UP HAMMIE FROM SCHOOL, RUN A COUPLE OF ERRANDS, PICK UP ZOE, BRING THEM BOTH HOME...
...THEN I'LL SWING BY THE OFFICE TO PICK UP SOME PAPERWORK, MEET YOUR MOM AT THE AIRPORT, GRAB SOME TAKE-OUT AND BE BACK HERE BY FIVE.
SOUNDS GOOD.
HOW CAN A 25% INCREASE IN THE SIZE OF A FAMILY MAKE THINGS 800% MORE COMPLICATED?
YOU THINK THIS IS BAD? WAIT 'TIL WE HAVE THREE KIDS ON THREE DIFFERENT SOCCER TEAMS.

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BYLYRA GARCELLANO


OK. BASED ON THIS MAP ALL WE NEED TO DO IS GET TO THE EDGE OF THE PHILIPPINES, HOP OVER TO INDONESIA AND THEN GET TO BOROBUDUR.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN "HOP OVER?"
I MEAN SKIP OR TAKE A LITTLE LEAP OR JUMP ON ONE LEG TO INDONESIA.
UH-HUH. SO WHEN WE SEE THE OCEAN WE TRY TO JUMP OVER IT.
YEP! HERE, I GOT US POGO STICKS SO WE CAN PRACTICE!

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Sally Field, Maria Shriver, Ethan Hawke, Ray Conniff

Happy Birthday: Your strategy must be well thought out this year. You have a lot to offer, but someone is wearing you down, leaving you too exhausted to pursue the very things that will lead to your success. Set your priorities and follow the direction you feel is most important. Your numbers are 9, 14, 19, 28, 32, 40

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Don't trust others with your personal papers. Keep information close to your chest. You must be sure not to donate more than you can really afford.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Your high energy should be spent pleasing your mate. You should have a heart-to-heart talk with family and find out exactly what the problems are and how you can help.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Your abilities and your talents are in sync with the work requirements. You should be able to make notable contributions that will help you win points with employers. Concentrate on your career.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): You can make some quality purchases today. Don't be afraid to call old friends and find out what they're up to. You can make physical changes that will enhance your appearance.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Don't bother trying to hide something from your mate. Be honest and clear the air. If you feel there is a chance of violence, have a friend go with you. It may be time for some soul-searching as far as your relationship goes.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): You can make financial gains. Let only those you trust in on your intentions. Allow yourself to enjoy what you have created, and don't feel guilty.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): You can make career moves or receive more responsibility and higher pay if you put forth an effort. Your performance will create new opportunities. You will find that the self-improvements you've been working on are showing results.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): You will find that you have gained popularity and respect. Now you can rely on the strong force of allies you've established to take over some of the less critical jobs. They are ready, willing and able to support your vision and help manifest it.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): You may want to start your own business, but don't quit your present job. Work longer hours until you can support yourself.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You can meet new partners if you attend community meetings. Your interest in the area that surrounds you will put you into a leadership position. Your ability to take charge and to focus the group will be extremely attractive to others.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Don't get involved in idle chatter or dilemmas that are none of your business. Someone afraid to speak his or her mind can easily drag you into a precarious position.

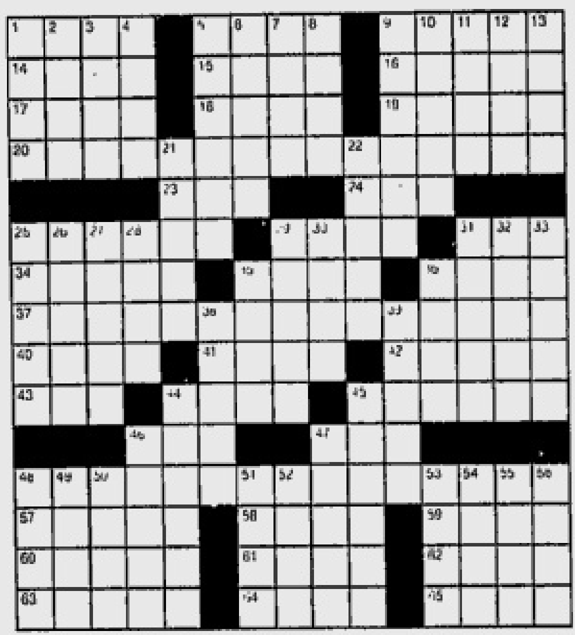
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Get together with people who are well informed in areas you have an interest in. It will be beneficial for you. Don't make promises you can't keep. Try not to say anything negative about others.

Birthday Baby: You will be a little wanderer. You will be curious about everything. You will be powerful in all that you do and a real team player, willing to go the distance in order to contribute your utmost.

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Hoist
5 Shoot the breeze
9 Sixth president
14 Burn balm
15 Gallivant
16 Kind of code or colony
17 Merlot or claret
18 You said it!
19 Place for a barbecue
20 Go out of bounds
23 Negative vote
24 Chow down
25 Long-eared hopper
29 Skier's ride
31 Cul-de-__
34 Arctic shelter
35 Spoiled tot
36 Slammer cubicle
37 Misuse power ostentatiously
40 Befuddled
41 Serpent's warning
42 Exuded
43 Flock member
44 Liberal __
45 Current measure
46 Pass easily
47 High peak
48 Bend rules
57 Florida key
58 New York stadium
59 Remedy
60 Love, French-style
61 Cordelia's father
62 Scenery chewers
63 Trail carriers
64 Conclusions
65 Drum out

DOWN
1 Chews the fat
2 Came to earth
3 Dunce-cap shape
4 Hold onto
5 Fancy neckwear
6 Cozy
7 Declare positively
8 Campers' shelter
9 Show up
10 Started a card game
11 Debate side
12 Water conduit
13 Blackthorn
21 Gibson garnish
22 Moor
25 Engage in ransacking
26 Luminous
27 Worldly-wise
28 Ring match
29 Bind for cooking
30 Takes one's turn at the plate
31 Take by force
32 Take in or let out
33 Glasgow's river
35 Switch partner?
36 Rider's whip
38 Flung
39 Pizzazz
44 Play group?
45 Offering sites
46 Thrash out
47 Out in front
48 Run out of steam
49 Variety of duck?
50 Age after Bronze
51 Man or Dogs
52 Subsequently
53 Sound reflection
54 Hilo festivity
55 Weapons
56 Into the sunset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By Diane C. Baldwin
Columbia, MD
11/6/02

Tuesday's Puzzle Solved

B	A	S	■	A	L	I	G	N	■	S	E	C	T	S
E	S	L	■	S	A	C	R	E	■	E	R	R	O	L
T	H	O	S	E	W	H	O	H	A	T	E	Y	O	U
I	T	A	L	■	■	■	W	R	I	T	■	O	L	E
D	O	N	O	T	W	I	N	U	N	L	E	S	S	■
E	N	E	■	H	I	S	■	■	T	E	E	T	H	E
■	■	■	■	E	N	S	O	R	■	■	G	A	E	L
E	B	B	■	Y	O	U	H	A	T	E	■	T	D	S
R	O	E	G	■	■	E	M	B	E	R	■	■	■	■
A	T	T	E	S	T	■	■	A	S	S	■	M	G	M
■	T	H	E	M	A	N	D	T	H	E	N	Y	O	U
A	L	E	■	A	R	O	O	■	■	■	U	S	A	F
D	E	S	T	R	O	Y	Y	O	U	R	S	E	L	F
A	U	D	I	T	■	E	L	A	R	A	■	L	I	L
S	P	A	N	S	■	S	E	R	U	M	■	F	E	E

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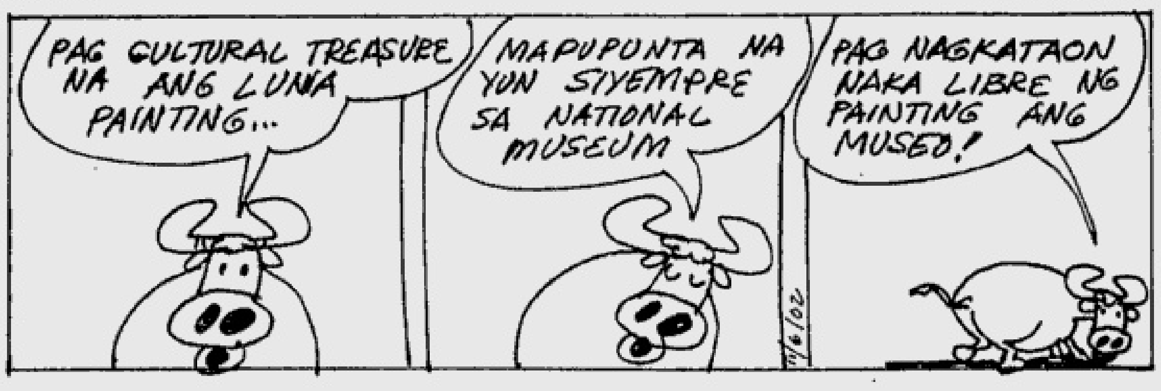
11/6/02

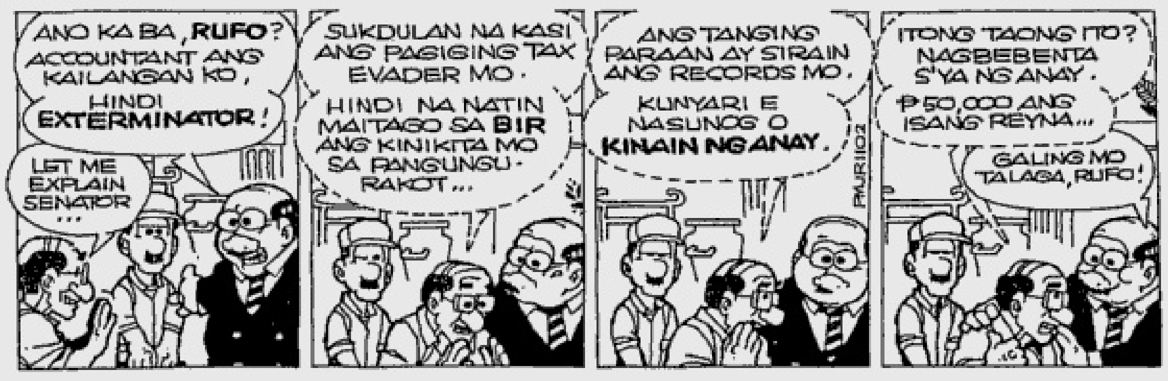
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


PAG CULTURAL TREASURE NA ANG LUNA PAINTING...
MAPUPUNTA NA YUN SIYEMPRE SA NATIONAL MUSEUM
PAG NAGKATAON NAKA LIBRE NG PAINTING ANG MUSEO!
11/6/02

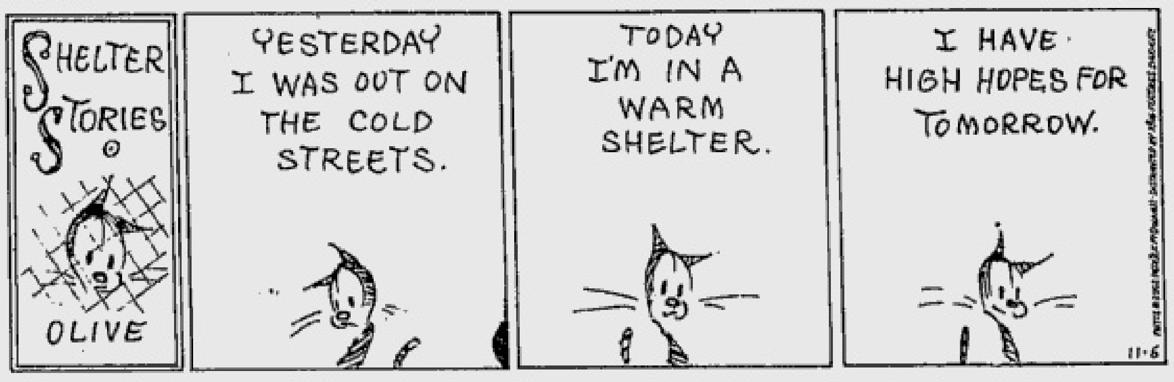
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


ANO KA BA, RUFO? ACCOUNTANT ANG KAILANGAN KO, HINDI EXTERMINATOR!
LET ME EXPLAIN SENATOR ...
SUKDULAN NA KASI ANG PAGIGING TAX EVADER MO.
HINDI NA NATIN MAITAGO SA BIR ANG KINIKITA MO SA PANGUNGURAKOT...
ANG TANGING PARAAN AY SIRAIN ANG RECORDS MO.
KUNYARI E NASUNOG O KINAIN NG ANAY.
PMJR1102
ITONG TAONG ITO? NAGBEBENTA S'YA NG ANAY.
₱50,000 ANG ISANG REYNA...
GALING MO TALAGA, RUFO!

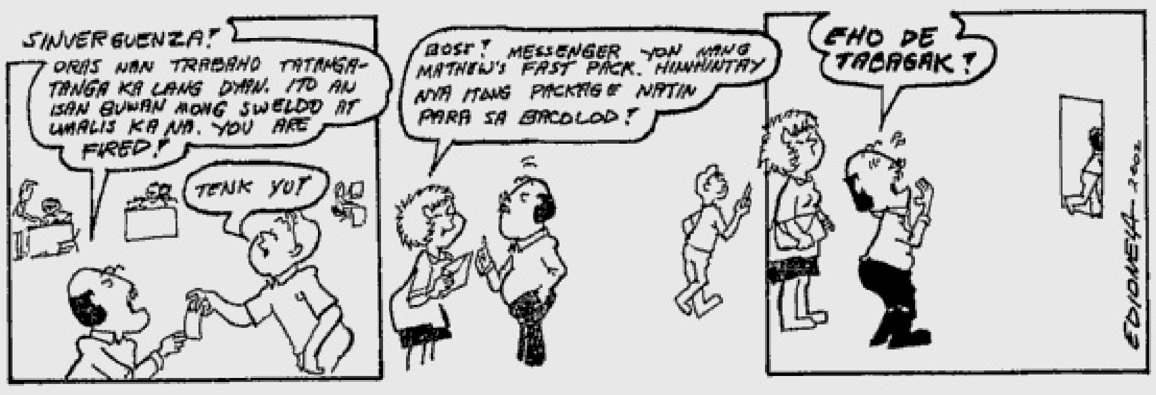
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


SHELTER STORIES
OLIVE
YESTERDAY I WAS OUT ON THE COLD STREETS.
TODAY I'M IN A WARM SHELTER.
I HAVE HIGH HOPES FOR TOMORROW.
11-6

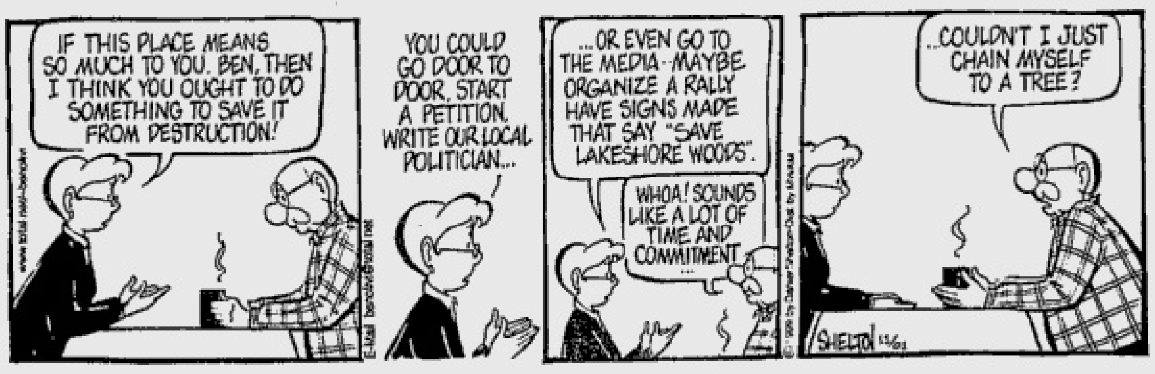
SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


SINVERGUENZA! ORAS NAN TRABAHO TATANGA-TANGA KA LANG DYAN. ITO AN ISAN BUWAN MONG SWELDO AT UMALIS KA NA. YOU ARE FIRED!
TENK YU!
BOSS! MESSENGER YON MANG MATHEW'S FAST PACK. HINIHINTAY NA ITONG PACKAGE NATIN PARA SA BACOLOD!
EHO DE TACAGAK!
EDIONELA 2002

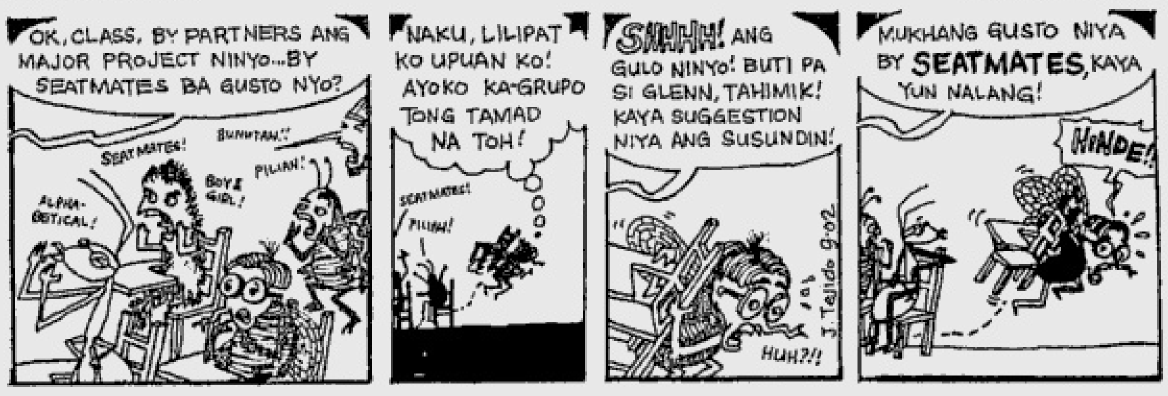
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


IF THIS PLACE MEANS SO MUCH TO YOU, BEN, THEN I THINK YOU OUGHT TO DO SOMETHING TO SAVE IT FROM DESTRUCTION!
YOU COULD GO DOOR TO DOOR, START A PETITION, WRITE OUR LOCAL POLITICIAN...
...OR EVEN GO TO THE MEDIA--MAYBE ORGANIZE A RALLY, HAVE SIGNS MADE THAT SAY "SAVE LAKESHORE WOODS".
WHOA! SOUNDS LIKE A LOT OF TIME AND COMMITMENT...
...COULDN'T I JUST CHAIN MYSELF TO A TREE?
SHELTON

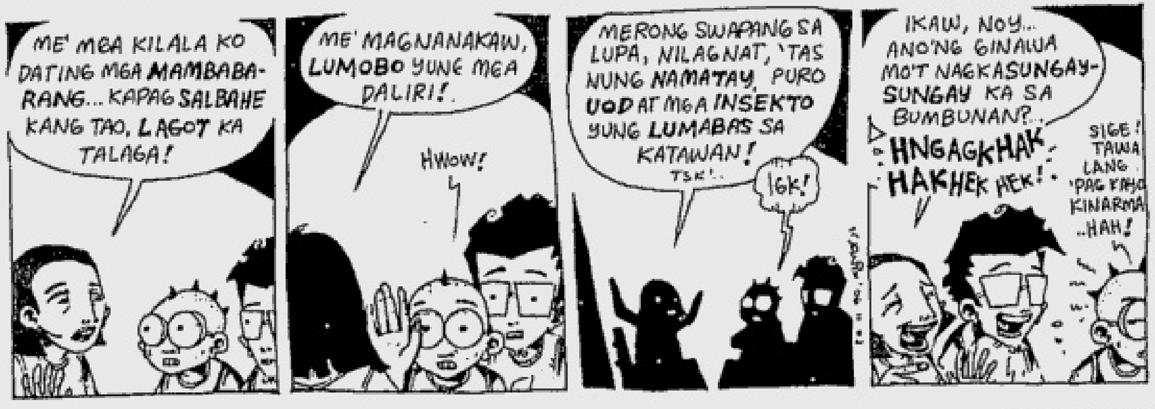
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


OK, CLASS, BY PARTNERS ANG MAJOR PROJECT NINYO...BY SEATMATES BA GUSTO NYO?
SEATMATES!
BUNUTAN!
BOY & GIRL!
PILIIN!
ALPHABETICAL!
NAKU, LILIPAT KO UPUAN KO! AYOKO KA-GRUPO TONG TAMAD NA TOH!
SEATMATES!
PILIIN!
SHHHH! ANG GULO NINYO! BUTI PA SI GLENN, TAHIMIK! KAYA SUGGESTION NIYA ANG SUSUNDIN!
HUH?!!
J. Tejido 9-02
MUKHANG GUSTO NIYA BY SEATMATES, KAYA YUN NALANG!
HINDE!!

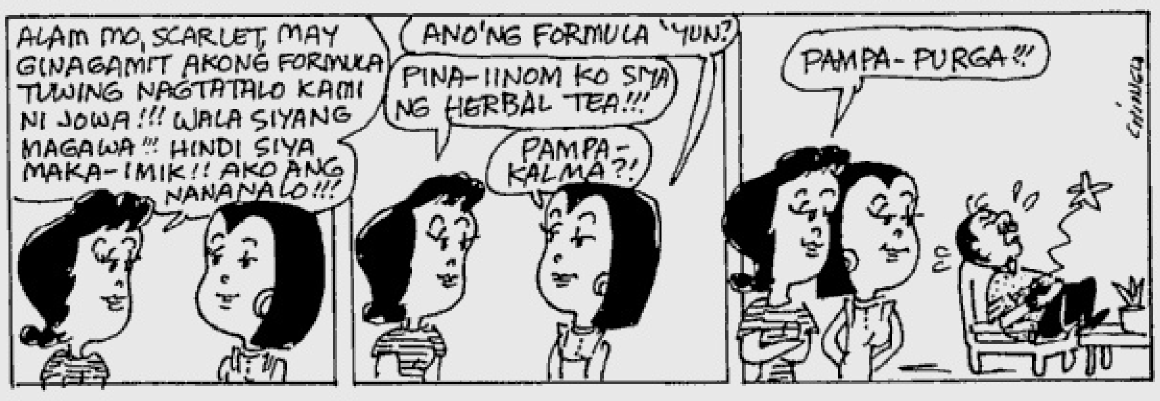
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


ME' MGA KILALA KO DATING MGA MAMBABARANG... KAPAG SALBAHE KANG TAO, LAGOT KA TALAGA!
ME' MAGNANAKAW, LUMOBO YUNG MGA DALIRI!
HWOW!
MERONG SWAPANG SA LUPA, NILAGNAT, 'TAS NUNG NAMATAY, PURO UOD AT MGA INSEKTO YUNG LUMABAS SA KATAWAN!
TSK!
IGK!
IKAW, NOY... ANO'NG GINAWA MO'T NAGKASUNGAY-SUNGAY KA SA BUMBUNAN?...
HNGAGKHAK HAKHEK HEK!
SIGE! TAWA LANG 'PAG KAYO KINARMA ..HAH!

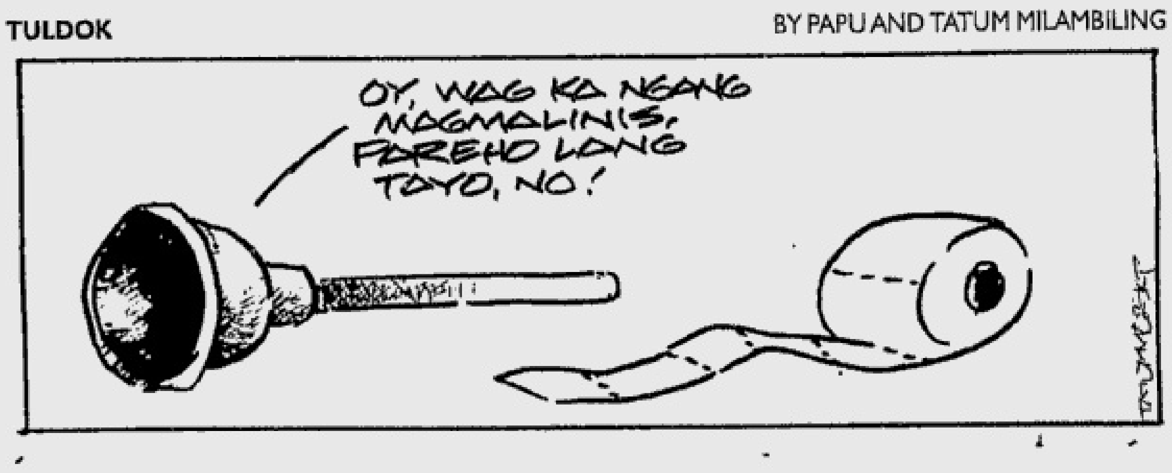
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


ALAM MO, SCARLET, MAY GINAGAMIT AKONG FORMULA TUWING NAGTATALO KAMI NI JOWA!!! WALA SIYANG MAGAWA!!! HINDI SIYA MAKA-IMIK!! AKO ANG NANANALO!!!
ANO'NG FORMULA 'YUN?
PINA-IINOM KO SIYA NG HERBAL TEA!!!
PAMPA-KALMA?!
PAMPA-PURGA!!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


OY, WAG KA NGANG MAGMALINIS, PAREHO LANG TAYO, NO!

Learning a lesson the hard way

By Miguel Garcia

This is the story of a gay male in his early 20s calling himself Thunderbird. He has been working for a couple of years now in Makati. He's "out" with "almost everyone, except family."

I FIRST felt a rough patch of skin around my anus late last year. At first I thought it was just a skin infection that would go away on its own.

But in January, with a handheld mirror, I saw that the rough patch had turned white with raised bumps (medical websites liken it to a cauliflower). The patch was itchy all the time and it stank. *Ang baho talaga.*

Also, after "doing business on the throne," I'd see spots of blood on the toilet paper.

At first I thought I might have hemorrhoids, but I wasn't sure since I'd never had the problem before. But I already had an inkling that it was more than that. I was in denial.

It took a psychological battle before I could bring myself to see a doctor, asking for referrals in a gay chat room because I didn't want to end up with a homophobic doctor.

I finally went to a proctologist (an expert in diseases of the lower colon, rectum and anus) in a Makati hospital, hoping he wouldn't have a problem treating a gay patient. When he said, after looking at the problem, "These aren't hemorrhoids," my heart sank. I broke out in a cold sweat and I was filled with dread.

After I got dressed, he asked, "Have you been a naughty boy?" I knew the question was coming, and what else could I do but nod?

He explained that I had anal warts or *condyloma acuminata*. Since I'd had unprotected sex, I would have to get blood tests to check for other STDs (sexually transmitted diseases) as a precaution.

"But don't worry, it's treatable," he said, which lifted my spirits a bit. He didn't explain much about my condition and I was too overwhelmed to ask questions. I asked him to spell it out so I could research it on the Internet.

After I left his office, I sat on the parking lot sidewalk, for God knows how long, staring into space. I tried to calm down by lighting a cigarette, even as I wondered what kind of mess I'd gotten myself into.

Condyloma acuminata

The Internet said my disease was caused by a virus and a lot of people actually had it. The virus was dormant in most cases and only became apparent when warts appeared. Both men and women could get the virus.

There were different kinds of treatments such as the use of topical medicines or burning off the warts with a laser. After the external warts had been treated, internal warts in the rectum had to be dealt with as well.

Like other viruses, the one causing the warts never really leaves the body. Only the symptoms (in this case, the warts) can be treated. In the United States, about a million new cases are reported every year.

Knowing I wasn't alone made it a little easier to accept my situation. But I didn't exactly jump for joy.

I didn't tell my family for obvious reasons. But I couldn't bring myself to tell my friends as well, even the gay ones. I don't know why I kept it a secret, I think I was just too ashamed.

Not having anyone to share the problem with was one of the hardest things for me. To get some kind of support, I joined an e-group for recovering condyloma patients, which helped allay my fears a bit.

I went into a deep depression. I couldn't sleep well, I lost my appetite, I lost interest in going out with friends, and I couldn't concentrate at work.

The cost of my treatments—P600 per visit—was another stress factor. I had to undergo treatment at least once a week. My doctor started with imiquimod cream (a hefty P300 per packet) that was supposed to help the immune system fight the virus.

After a few treatments, my doctor felt it was working too slowly, so he switched to an older method of treatment, podophyllin. It kept wart cells from reproducing. But it also hurt a lot. I had difficulty walking after my first day of treatment because the skin around my anus had turned raw.

On an emotional level, I was glad that the medicine was working so fast and efficiently. It boosted my morale to know I was getting rid of the warts.

I just hoped my officemates didn't notice the way I was walking. It hurt so much that sometimes I would stop at mid-step just to catch my breath.

Negative results

Thankfully, my treatments ended in March. In May, I finally got the courage to have other blood tests, including those for hepatitis and HIV (human immunodeficiency virus that causes the deadly acquired immune deficiency syndrome or AIDS).

I had another psychological battle before I could get myself to get the tests. But the negative results made up for it.

Looking back, I just feel incredibly stupid. I always paid attention during sex education in school, I read almost all of Margie Holmes' books, I read magazine articles on safe sex, so I should have known better.

I mean, sure, I use condoms, but sometimes, in the heat of the moment and you're out of condoms ... it's the "sometimes" that gets you!

I don't think there's going to be a next "sometimes," though.

Even now, there are moments when I still feel the trauma of it all, but I'm much better now. The warts are all gone, I'm not depressed anymore and I've "gotten my groove back," so to speak.

I've also started telling my friends, and it becomes easier each time. Although it takes a lot of effort, I share my story because I think there's a lesson in there somewhere, for young and old, gay and straight alike. I feel that it's a story that should be told.

Whether one is a homosexual or heterosexual, non-exclusive, unprotected sex has its consequences.

E-mail the author at miggarcia@hehe.com.

> 'I use condoms, but sometimes, in the heat of the moment and you're out of condoms ... it's the 'sometimes' that gets you'

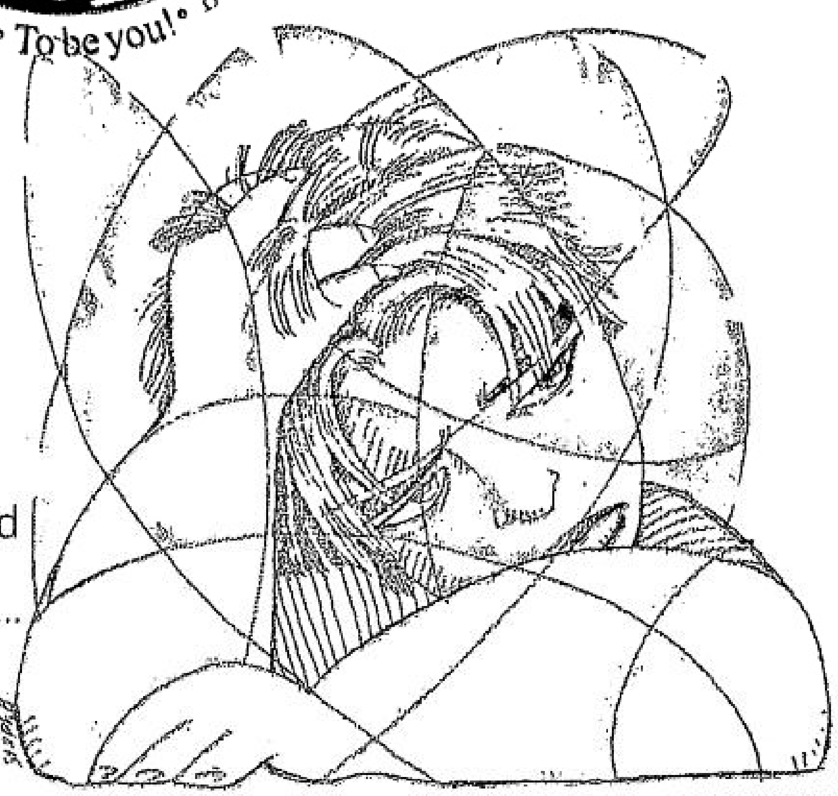
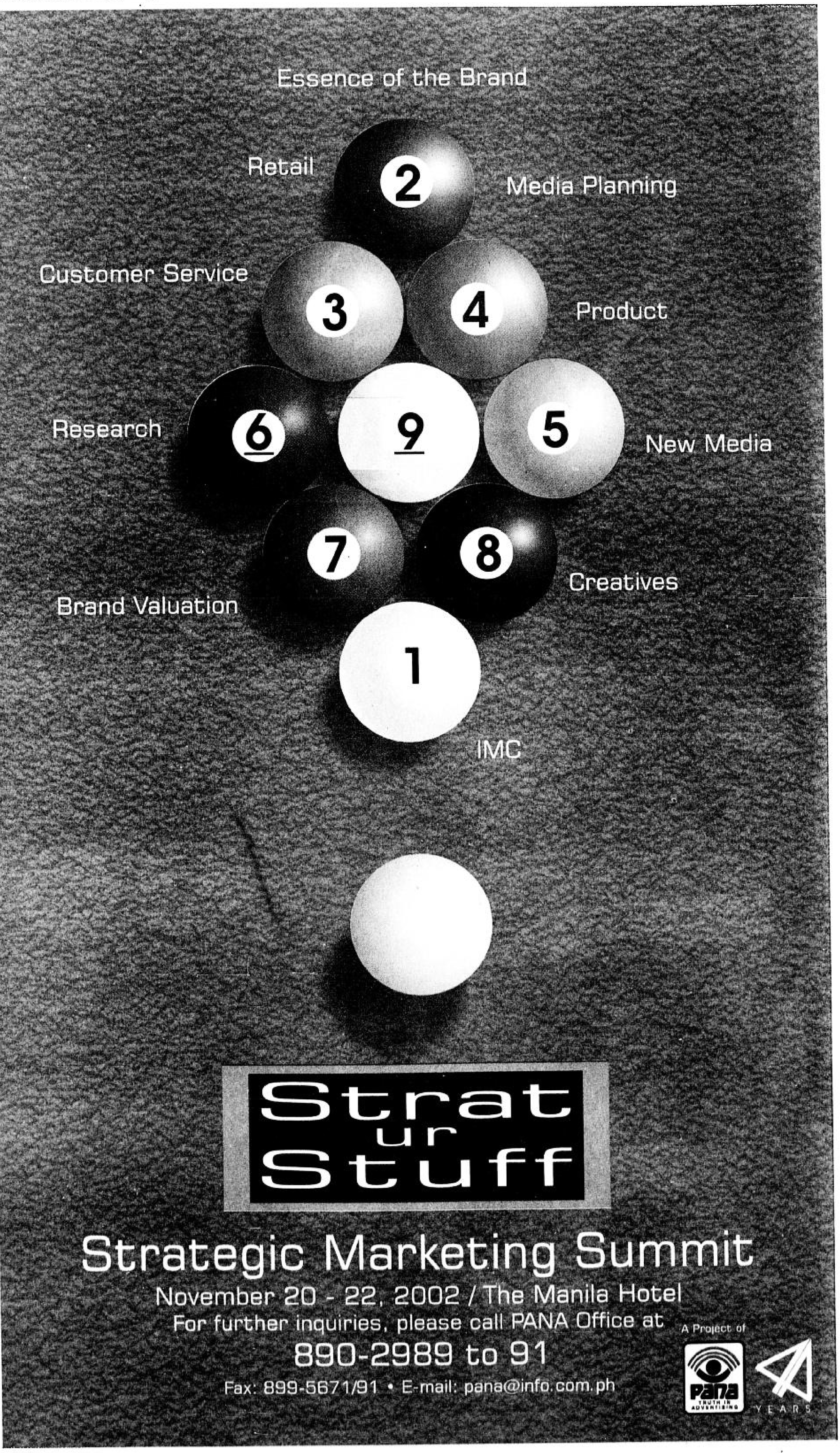


ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO



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YEARS

Why Orosa has become gay but boring

By Shahani Gania
2bUI Contributor

"*HUWAG kang pupunta sa Orosa. Puro bakla ang nandoon,*" I overheard the clueless young man warn his companion somewhere along Nakpil. I looked at him, scoffed and, well... what else could I do? I couldn't blame him. Any straight and ignorant person's visit to the gay-infested Orosa Street in Malate may come as a huge culture shock: The street is lined with all types of gay men and women—butch or femme—standing around, drinking, laughing, cruising and kissing.

> The Malate street has become too gay and thus, colorless and without variety

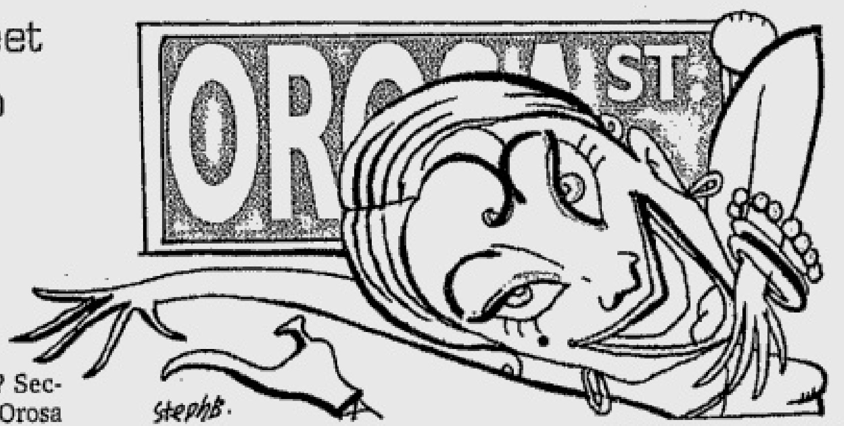

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

Orosa is also where the lesbian gay bisexual and transgendered community celebrate Gay Pride every June. Orosa so reeks of gayness that it is called the gay capital of the Philippines. It is too gay, and that's what I don't like about it.

First of all, I don't see the point why gay people have to converge in just one area and claim it to be theirs. Sure, the broomstick method of sticking together in order to be strong works, but so what? Be strong for what? Second, even though it is gay, Orosa has already lost its bohemian feel. All I see now are these straight-acting and straight-looking gay men—in predictable uniform—who confuse themselves as bisexuals.

Where have all the colorful cross-dressers gone? Where have the artists gone? Where are all those fabulous people who actually made Malate?

And, lastly, it has already become a tad too boring. Going to Orosa every Friday and Saturday night like clockwork is already as dull as it gets.

Flocking together has its obvious advantages. It is a more organized party that way, making it easier to meet up with friends and being able to meet people who have the same wavelength. But don't you think it would be more fun if there were a little chaos and spontaneity?

Boycott

Luckily, I have friends who are actually more bored with "the gay capital" than I am. During the months we boycotted Orosa (we went back on Halloween—big mistake), there was no place we went to that we didn't feel welcomed. Some nights we'd go drinking in the "*inuman*" places in Quezon City; other nights we'd go to Big Sky Mind or Freedom Bar and listen to music and the occasional poetry reading.

I enjoy being in these "straight" places because there is a more interesting mix of people, clique or not. Our conversations do not begin with, "*Bakla*, did you see what *chuvaneskaya* is wearing? *Chaka*!" Our conversations were much more artless! Our topics were not limited to stuff that screaming young gays talk about day in and day out (i.e. fashion, workout, if the cute *chenelyn* is "out" already).

The best thing about these places is that we are loved—strangers would come up to us and say how much they love our clothes or how fabulous we look, and they'd appreciate it if we'd come more often. We also receive compliments when in Orosa, but they usually come with a snicker that either means envy or mockery.

The one thing a gay person needs to have when hanging out with an all-straight crowd is respect. You can't just get smashed and start hitting on people. You must respect their preferences. That way, they will respect yours. Sometimes you have to deal with a homophobic, and the only cure is to show that you can be trusted.

A drunk friend groped at an acquaintance's member, and that episode almost ended in a near *suntukan* on the street. Another almost got voted out of Boracay because he molested waiters in a bar.

You see, you can do all the other gay stuff you want to do—be glamorous and all—but never show sexual interest in a straight crowd. Never. You can look but you can't touch. If you want to touch, well, it's either you take the risk or you might as well go back to the gay capital.

No anti-gay place

I don't think there is any real anti-gay place in Manila. At this time and age, homosexuality is highly tolerated, if not accepted. You can attend a rock concert and jump into the mosh pit without anyone cussing about your being gay. They will even admire you for your courage and for standing out—*astig ka*!

I don't hate Orosa for being too gay. I just want to encourage excitement and variety—let's just all disperse and move on to greener pastures. Why step out of the closet only to keep yourself in a box with the same old people? Why stick to one place when the entire point of being gay is being free from the mold? Why flock with birds of the same feathers when you can actually group with others, making your circle much more colorful?

A place isn't gay because the waiters are half-naked or majority of the people are homosexuals or that the walls are pink; it is because you are there and you are the life of the party, making everyone as gay and happy as they can get.

Think of it as a mission: You can't spread gay awareness and knowledge if you concentrate on just one area. Divide and conquer. Spread the fun. Besides, the drinks in Orosa are overpriced.

SPECIAL RATES FOR ROMANTIC COMEDY
Ricci Chan, who has essayed the role of Angel in the musical "Rent," plays Mote in Tanghalang Pilipino's "Ang Ligawang Ligaw," a hilarious story of hidden passions, misplaced love letters, mistaken identities and secret desires. Watch this Filipino translation of Shakepeare's "Love's Labour's Lost" at special rates for the opening weekend, only P200 (regular tickets) and P125 (student-priced tickets) for Nov. 8 (8 p.m.) and Nov. 9 and 10 (2:30 p.m.). Call 832-3661/1125 local 1620.

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LIFESTYLE

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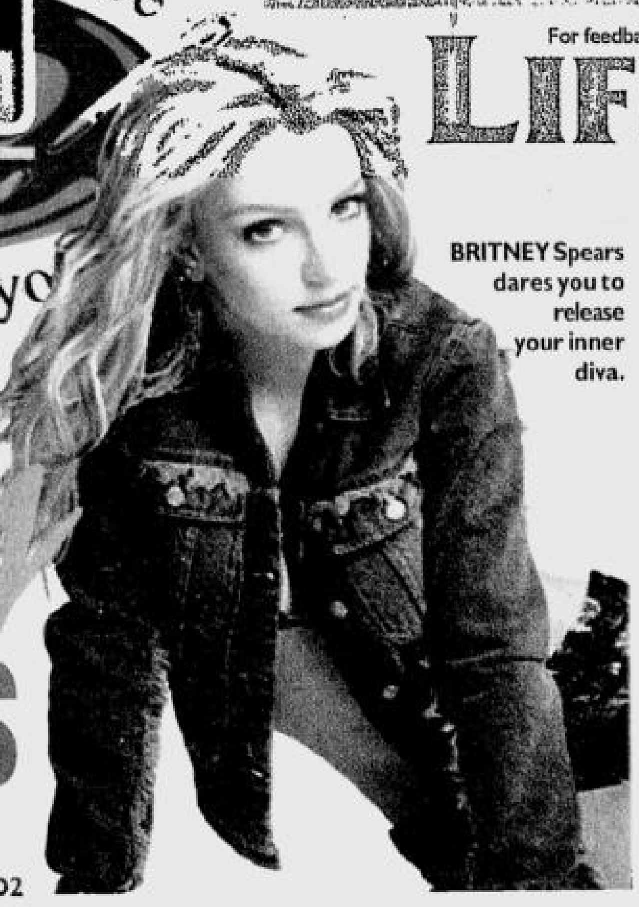
Gay icons



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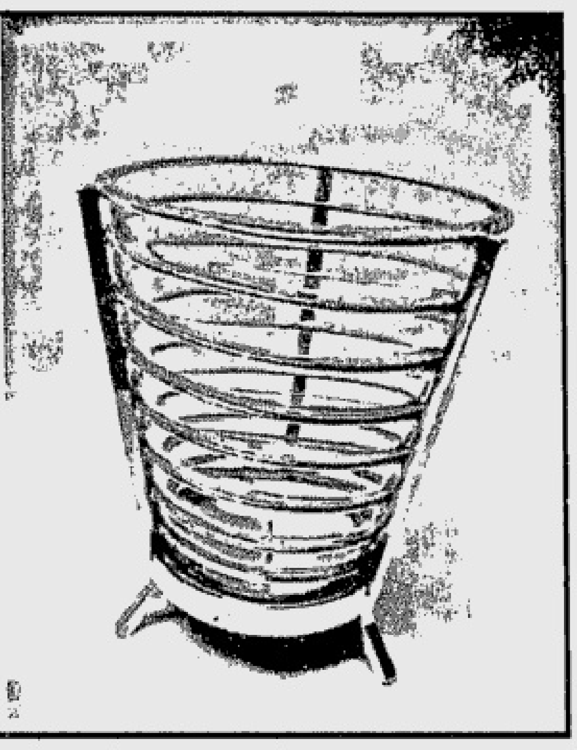

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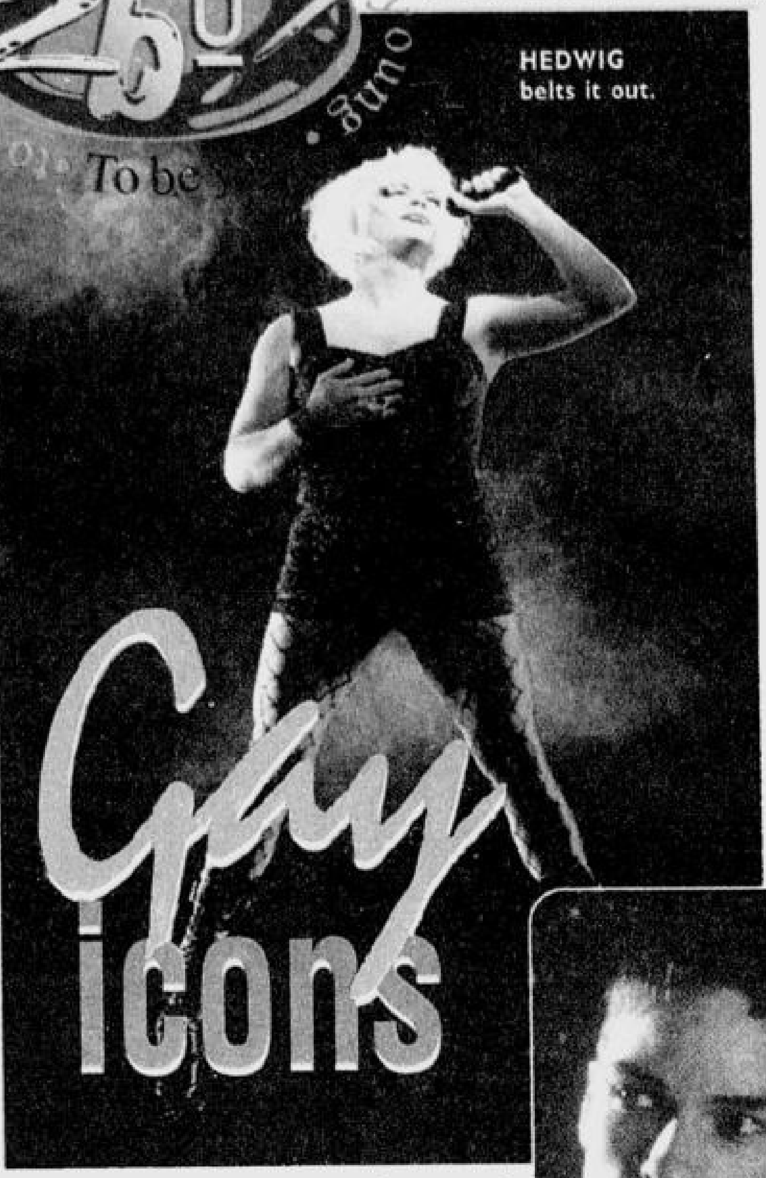

HEDWIG belts it out.

Gay icons

By Maui V. Reyes and Shahani Gania
2bU! Correspondents

WHAT makes a youth gay icon? Someone who's fashionable, who has made an impact on the community, and whom the community looks up to. In short, he's someone the gay community can relate to.

Music

Cher—Who can afford more than a gazillion costume changes in one concert?! Cher will forever be noted as the concert queen, the diva with no limits, a chameleon with many disguises. Did we mention the... um... surgical enhancements?

Britney Spears—You've seen your share of "You Drive Me Crazy" drag queen dance competitions. Such belly-baring dance moves and pop tunes have triggered everyone's inner diva.

Regine Velasquez—Need we say more?

Movies

Rufa Mae Quinto—From "Booba" to "Super B," we can't get enough of her funny antics and accent!

Ai-Ai de las Alas—Can we say f-u-n-n-y?!

Brandon Teena from "Boys Don't Cry"—Portrayed by Hillary Swank, Teena's story stirred the emotions of both gays and straight people with her courage, determination and dignity.

Christian from "Clueless"—Yes, it's okay to enjoy shopping with a babe who's more stylish than you.

Patrick Swayze, John Leguizamo and **Wesley Snipes** in "To Wong Foo, Thanks for Everything, Julie Newmar"—Cross-dressing was never this hilarious and touching.

TV

Buffy the Vampire Slayer doesn't quite make the cut. Besides, when she kicks butt, her hair's still in place. Like a true Amazonian woman, Xena, Warrior Princess saves the small talk for later, and fights to the finish just in time to hang out at the pub to look for more trouble.

HILLARY Swank as Brandon Teena in "Boys Don't Cry".

Joey Mead—The epitome of what every gay guy wants to be—and have. Great personality, great body.

Jack from "Will & Grace"—We can't get enough of this Cher-lovin' character! Who can forget the production "Jack 2000"?

Jack from "Dawson's Creek"—Just because you're not exactly straight doesn't mean you can't make the football team and score a hot significant other.

MODEL BEHAVIOR. Angelina Jolie as fashion tragedy Gia Carangi in the movie "Gia"

Theater

Behn Cervantes—A great theater actor, writer and director, who also starred in "Portrait of an Artist as a Filipino" by Nick Joaquin, directed by the fab Anton Juan, played one of the female leads.

Tony Mabesa—An acclaimed theater director, he has given life to Rizal's works through "Noli," "Fili" and "Fili 2" as well as "Saint Louis Loves Dem Filipinos."

Ricci Chan—Played Angel in "Rent," and by far gave the most memorable performance in the play.

Hedwig— Rock' n' Roll with an attitude.

Fashion

Madonna—Jean Paul Gaultier wouldn't be where he is if this diva didn't strap on those torpedo bras. Madonna broke all taboos and turned all our fantasies into reality. A true fashion icon.

Kevyn Aucoin—Six months into New York, he got a makeup gig at Vogue. His story is the fairytale of every struggling make-up artist, having his own column in Allure as well as publishing three books.

Gia Carangi—The model's made-for-TV movie/documentary's tagline says it all: Too beautiful to die, too wild to live.

Tessa Prieto-Valdes—Who else can pull all those outrageous outfits off?!

Literature

Neil Garcia and Danton Remoto — They wrote "Ladlad 1" and its sequel, a compilation of gay literature.

Oscar Wilde—In Out of the Past, he is described as having "mocked the moral seriousness of his age...arguing that aesthetics were more important than ethics, and promoting art for art's sake." How gay can he still be?

Politics

Imelda Marcos—Her life is one of the most ultimate "dramedies" of our time. Who can forget her many dramatic moments, her poise and let's not forget her fashion sense.

"JUST Jack!" Who wouldn't want to have a gal pal like Jack?

E.R.'s Kerry Weaver

Boob tube reflects changing gay image

HAYES

By Armin Adina
PDI Research Department

THE PRESENCE of gays in society is undeniable. And media, as a reflection of reality, have shown the different roles they play in our lives. Television, for one, has chronicled how the image of gays has changed, and has been an important tool in gaining acceptance for them.

Back when the remote control was a luxury, gay men were depicted as cross-dressing, screaming faggots while lesbians were portrayed as trouser-clad, capped hooligans. These days, gay characters in TV programs are more diverse and flexible.

Here are some gay personas currently seen on TV:

Will Truman, portrayed by Eric McCormack in the Emmy award-winning sitcom "Will & Grace," is a successful Manhattan lawyer. Except for his being gay, he does not look different from your usual power-dressing attorneys.

The straight-looking gay guy who is successful despite being "out" is a breath of fresh air to viewers who often see RuPaul-ish characters (I am not suggesting that they are not welcome on TV).

And it seems that one gay guy is not enough for this show. Sean Hayes, as Jack McFarland, plays the flamboyant friend of Will and Grace. His character is closer to the usual TV gays. He is an extrovert, outlandish and talkative. Some may consider 'Jack' a step back after the seemingly progressive move of having the Will Truman-type in the lead. But Jack helps Will "get in touch with reality" whenever it is necessary. Hayes has received Emmy nominations for his performance.

Gay characters also play significant roles in other programs. The medical drama "ER," a frequent Emmy nominee, has Dr. Kerry Weaver. Played by Laura Innes, she is the lesbian chief of emergency medicine. Weaver is tough but Innes does not need to project a masculine image to play the part well.

Gay in police work

A gay in the police force? Bill Brochtrup as John Irvin is a police administrative assistant in "NYPD Blue," a critically-acclaimed police drama. His character shows that being gay does not necessarily mean being a sissy. It also shows how gays can be efficient in the police force.

The. action series "Dark Angel" screams girl power not only because of the lead character, Max. Her best friend Original Cindy, portrayed by Australian Valarie Rae Miller, also projects woman empowerment. The cleverly stylish street-smart gay gal waits for Miss Right while looking out for Max's best interest.

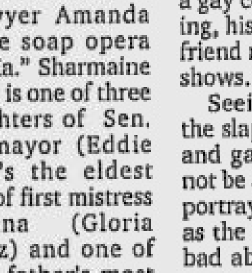
In the comedy "Spin City," Michael Boatman is Carter Heywood, a black gay man working in the New York City Mayor's office. Heywood's sexuality does not get in the way of his work. It also does not stop him from having a harmonious relationship with his colleagues.

Coming-of-age television shows have adapted quite quickly and easily to this new "gayness." In "Dawson's Creek," for example, lead female character Joey Potter (Katie Holmes) went steady with Jack McPhee (played by Kerr Smith), who would turn out to be gay. They remain good friends, however, despite that development.

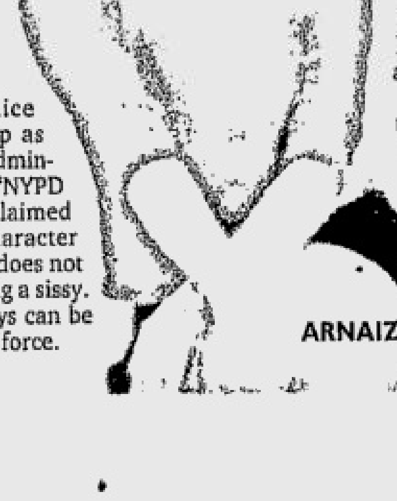
Ian Gomez portrays Javier in the hip youth drama "Felicity." As the gay owner of the coffee shop where Felicity (Keri Russell) works, he is not only her boss but also a friend to her and her gang. Javier, being older, sometimes provides the wisdom the "kids" need.

Gay witches

Perhaps one of the most celebrated gay partnerships on the boob tube is in the small screen adaptation of the '80s flick "Buffy the Vampire Slayer." The witch Willow, played by Alyson Hannigan, is romantically involved with Tara, another witch, played by Amber Benson. Unlike other gay characters in other shows where the roles are played only by guest stars (thus, not appearing regularly), the two are mainstays of Buffy.


QUIZON

Shows on local TV have also had their fair share of gay men and women. One of the latest is lawyer Amanda Montemayor in the soap opera "Kung Mawawala Ka." Sharmaine Arnaiz, as Amanda, is one of three illegitimate daughters of Sen. Leandro Montemayor (Eddie Garcia). She's the eldest daughter of first mistress Charina (Gloria Diaz) and one of her father's most trusted aides. She was in charge of his office before her appointment as Press Secretary.


ARNAIZ

Amanda's assistant, played by Nina Ricci Alagao, was her former girlfriend in the soap. Alagao's character had to leave so the gay angle in this program is in limbo. It will probably resurface as soon as Alagao returns to the show or until they find a new love interest for Amanda. Arnaiz got an acting award nomination for her role.

Interestingly, the recent, more progressive gay characterizations feature lawyers, like Will Truman. The defunct local court drama "Your Honor," top-billed by Richard Gomez, featured a couple of lawyers from rival law firms. They were dating despite the fact that one was married with children.

Eric Quizon's portrayal of a cross-dressing entertainer in Markova has earned praise. He currently plays a gay man, sans makeup and feather boa, in the drama series "Sana ay Ikaw na Nga." In the show, he is Gilbert Zalameda, married to lead character Cecilia (Tanya Garcia). Their marriage, of course, is a hoax. He started as a good guy but had since been cruel to Cecilia.

Macho is 'outed'

The latest addition to gay roles on TV is Gardo Versoza, who sheds his macho image to play Nora Aunor's best friend, Dionisi, in "Bituin." Versoza said he watched tapes of the gay series "Queer as Folk" to prepare for his role. But it seems that local sensibilities had a strong pull so that influences of the foreign show and its characters are hardly seen in Versoza's portrayal of a gay confidante. Though entertaining, his character owes more to gay-friend roles in old local films and TV shows.

Seeing Diego being ridiculed in the slapstick sitcom "Beh Bote Nga" and gag show "Bubble Gang" may not be a step forward in terms of gay portrayals on Philippine TV. Dubbed as the "Pambansang Bading," I feel bad about the poor representation homosexuals in the whole country get from him. How he is being treated on TV is certainly not how Filipinos regard their gay compatriots. But since gays still have far to go to earn complete respect and recognition, it does not help to see the likes of Diego being treated as second-class citizens and scorned and mocked.

Indeed, while there has been much progress in the portrayal of gays on TV, there is still a lot of room for improvement before television can be considered a gay-friendly medium.

Heartwarming gay movies

By Giles Ivan A.Aquino
2bU! Correspondent

WE have enjoyed all sorts of movies be-cause they are fun, entertaining and hi-larious or simply because they are gay. Here are some gay movies that have touched the soft part of my heart.

'Threesome'

Girl loves gay guy, gay guy loves straight guy. This film is more sexual than one could imagine. Eddy and Stuart live in the same flat until a woman named Alex suddenly moves in with them. Alex falls for Eddy who realizes that he's gay and has hidden desires toward his roommate Stuart. The three of them have pledged not to develop any romantic relationships among themselves. But lust becomes the tie that binds their friendship.

Straight guy Stuart realizes that everything that's going on is wrong and decides to end the bond.

Gay factor: 3.5 out of 5 popcorns

'To Wong Foo, Thanks for Everything, Julie Newmar'

Vida Boheme and Noxeema Jackson (played by verteran actors Wesley Snipes and Patrick Swayze), both expert drag queens, tags along with them inexperienced "drag princess" Chi Chi (played by John Leguizamo). On their trip from New York to L.A., their cadillac suddenly bugs down and they are caught in the middle of an unheard town which they transforms, using only their God-given talents, into a more festive and a more lively neighborhood. Vida Boheme makes almost deaf and mute grandma able to speak and hear again; Noxeema Jackson taught old maid girl power; and Chi Chi gives up Bobby Ray in the name of friendship.

This film is the epitome of gay power and has moved the hearts of viewers. It gives the perspective that gays are also the creation of God. In fact, they are angels.

Gay factor: 5 out of 5 popcorns

'The Birdcage'

Robin Williams, who is an owner of a gay club called the Birdcage, is suddenly plunged into a dilemma of formal acting—straight acting. His son fell in love with a girl who happens to have a conservative family; moreover, a senator father played by Gene Hackman.

Gay factor: 2 out of 5 popcorns

'The Broken Hearts Club'

This is a fresh and heartwarming story of a group of gay friends in Hollywood who have their own stories of triumph and loss. If you find "To Wong Foo" too drag queen, this film stars straight acting men who plays hard in the field of baseball. The fact that all characters are gay makes the movie very interesting. The film shows how friends could be perplexing and yet great.

In this film, gays are presented with different circumstances, what makes them vulnerable and what makes them human. If you want to get to know a gay guy more, "The Broken Hearts Club" could be a good reference, but, of course, nothing beats a good personal relationship with your gay friend.

Gay rating: 4.5 out of 5

'The Priest'

This film features an adamant Catholic priest played by Linus Roache, who is troubled by his being gay and his vow of celibacy. In one of the scenes, hypocrisy surfaced in Father Greg's character when he refuses to give his gay lover the sacrament of Communion after his intimate scene with the latter is shown. He is torn between keeping the truth about a girl who confesses the brutality of her father while he keeps focused on his own hidden problems and troubles.

Gay factor: 4 out of 5 popcorns

'Philadelphia'

Academy award-winning Tom Hanks plays a lawyer, Andrew Beckett, afflicted with AIDS. He is fired from a prestigious law firm because of his ailment. In his desire to win the case, he hires Joe, a homophobic lawyer played by Denzel Washington. While both of them struggle to win their own issues, this film didn't struggle to win the hearts of viewers. It is able to educate on the effects of AIDS on friends and relatives, and how to deal with it.

Gay factor: 5 out 5 popcorns

'In and Out'

You can't hide any secret for so long, especially with a star student around. This film is about a professor who is a closet gay (Kevin Kline)and is actually engaged when suddenly his former student(Matt Dillon)reveals his dark secret days before his marriage. While it is hilarious it also has its dragging moments.

Gay factor: 3 out of 5 popcorns

'Poison'

This is one of the most disturbing films I have ever seen, aside from "Crying Game" and "M. Butterfly." Poison is about a prisoner who discovers he's gay during his long stay in jail. This shows how a man can become gay due to his environment.

Gay factor: 4 out of 5 popcorns

Other gay movies or movies with gay tones that you may want to give a try are "Maurice," "Gods and Monsters," "The Next Best Thing," "Total Eclipse," "The Talented Mr. Ripley" and "Tea with Mussolini."

Special thanks to Jamie Majaducon for the VCDs and Carlo Neil Francisco for the list

E-mail the author at gilesaquino@edsamail.com.ph

To Wong Foo, Thanks for Everything! Julie Newmar

2BU! SURVEY

What makes you gay?

ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

MANY of us view those who move, sound, look, speak, think or feel like the opposite sex as automatically gay. In our cruel and prejudiced society, a man who has clean, manicured nails and uses lip balm is rumored to be gay, while a pretty 25-year-old single woman who has short hair and hates skirts is speculated to be queer.

There is this school of thought that believes everyone is naturally bisexual, that we all have male and female sides. If that's the case, then we all have a sort of homosexuality in all of us. We may not want to bed and marry people of the same sex but we sure can appreciate both male and female beauty. And thanks to constant male and female presence in our lives, influence from the opposite sex no matter how little is undeniable.

From campy stuff (like wearing wigs) to plain girly ones (like tucking hair behind the ears), and from minimalism (like sporting really short hair) to even more reduction (like using a minimizer), here are the quirks of the so-called straight (and some gay ones, too), who have the balls and nuts to come out in the open.

What makes me gay? My being perky and short-tempered. And of course, my ability to do or have a makeover when it is called for.—**Priya Sachdev, 20, SPCM**

My lingo. *Mas bakla pa nga ako sa mga bakla, eh!*—**Alma, 20, emphasizes that she doesn't look like one though**

I'm such a huge fan of Madonna and I think that's just so gay.—**Chris, 19, AdMU**

Ang mga mapipilantik kong pilikmata.—**PP Lapil, 24, adds that they are natural**

I don't like baggy clothes. I wear stuff that fit me right, but my friends tease me about it. *Mukha daw akong baklang pumorma.*—**J, 23, DLSU**

Ang fondness *ko* for lollipops.—**Budoi, 16, loves Chupa Chups**

Mukha daw akong lalaki kahit nakapalda. Ayun, mukhang bakla.—**M. Smith, 26, likes wearing pants**

My adventurous fashion sense.—**Sariwang Saribong, 20, UPHR**

Ang pagiging fan ko ni Barbra Streisand.—**Zaldee Sanchez, 32, hates Salbakuta**

I use a minimizer for my boobs.—**Sheena, 18, hasn't watched Booba**

I tuck my hair *sa likod ng* ears *ko. Lagi sobra.*—**Lea, 19, wants to be a shampoo commercial model**

Two of my most favorite songs of all time are "Somebody" and "Hiding Inside Myself" and they say *na pambakla daw ang mga yun.*—**Ley, 20, somebody's somebody**

My creative side.—**Eila, 15, Bloomfield Academy**

Ang pagiging madaldal ko.—**Starlet, 16, Las Piñas College**

I like pink. Does that count?—**PJ, 19, also digs Pink**

Ang hilig sa pagrampa!—**Chichay, 25, reportedly looks like someone who used to host "Eezy Dancing"**

I'm such a crybaby. My soft side makes me gay and feminine, I guess.—**Dexter Rada, 26, loves that Crybaby bubble gum**

I appreciate male beauty, but I'm straight. *Hanggang* appreciate *lang naman, eh.* It's not as if I want to have sex with fellow guys.—**Joe L., 18, appreciates John Cusack**

*Nakipag-*on *ako* once so part of me is gay but that's all in the past now. I'm purely hetero now.—**Alley Jersey, 26, head over heels in love with present boyfriend**

Lack of hair and absence of boobs.—**Rubee, 22, also lacks height**

May bigote ako. Yuck, *'no?*—**Menchie, 28, itching to try those hair-waxing treatments**

Adam's apple *ko.*—**Eve, 19, loves apple juice**

I get goose bumps when the barber gives me a haircut. There's something about it that turns me on but it's not like I want to do it with the barber.—**Ja Ruel, 19, hasn't had a haircut for months now**

They say that only females and gay guys powder their nose. I secretly have a compact and use it inside the cubicle.—**Powderpuff Pol, 26, uses all Clean & Clear products**

My love for stand-up comedy acts.—**Ice, 16, was once tortured by gays when he went onstage**

Boses bakla daw ako.—**Shell E. Watig, 18**

I like that song from "The Little Mermaid."—**Nadine, 17, misses Super Si Reyna**

*Lagi akong nagpapa-*manicure at pedicure.—**Marlon, 21, emphasizes he only uses colorless nail polish**

I sing female songs *sa* videoke.—**Dekdek, 27, videoke king**

I dig the Powerboys.—**Gelo, 21, uses Rexona**

Tumitili ako pag nakikita ko si Andrea Corr.—**Makamasa, 27, teacher**

I adore "Sex & the City" and mostly girls and *pa-*girls watch it, according to my wife.—**Bob, 31, misses Carrie and the gang**

I say "omigod" and "duh" too much. *Baklang-bakla kasi yung* delivery, *eh.*—**Katrina, 19, St. Scholastica's College**

Meron akong kikay kit.—**La, 23, teacher**

I'm a neat freak.—**Leo, 23, loves his Palm Pilot**

Masyado akong maporma at maarte sa damit.—**Donnel, 18, would pose nude given the right price**

I design clothes.—**May, 26, bum**

I raise my eyebrows 60 times a minute.—**Liezel, 24, plucks her eyebrows**

Ang mala-colegiala kong "siyeeeet!"—**Jezzner, 18, definitely digs *colegialas***

My friends.—**Pam, 22, fag hag**

Biggest fan *ako dati ng* Spice Girls.—**Tristan Jacob Niño, 18, singles out Ginger Spice as his fave**

I find Marco Lobregat cute.—**Mark, 22, bisexual**

Compiled by Niño Mark M. Sablan

E-mail the author at omark_katot@yahoo.com

Chuva chuk chak chenelyn chenelyn chika

By 2bU! Correspondents

YOUR gay friends are putting you out of the loop? Having a hard time watching the local show-biz talk shows? Is your vocabulary a bit rusty? 2bU! has compiled these gay terms that have been catching fire in various circles. Given the constantly changing nature of gay lingo, the list is just a glimpse of the colorful language that's used from beauty parlors to parties, from boardrooms to bedrooms and everywhere else in between!

Ades—also: *adeslak, anda*; money; e.g. "I can't go out tonight. *Wala na akong ades!*"

Balajura—also: *balaj, balarge*; no manners, vulgar; e.g. "We're having dinner with my parents later. Don't be so *balarge!*"

Bigamy—big; e.g. "Have you seen her cabbage rose? Bigamy!"

B.Y.—handsome; etymology: first and last letter of "*beauty*"; e.g. "The new exchange student? B.Y.!"

Carry *lang*—no problem, it's okay; etymology: in fashion, it doesn't matter what you wear, as long as you carry it well; e.g. "I have so much homework tonight, *pero* carry *lang.*"

Daing na bangus—also: *ngangis, paminta, pamhin*; discreet gay, straight-acting gay; e.g. "Sister, *wala pa rin tayong* boyfriend! *Dami kasing daing na bangus!*"

Delilah—also: *lukish*—going crazy; e.g. "*Nade-*delilah *na ako sa dami ng* homework *natin!*"

Daot—also: *okray, pongalangala*—criticize, irritate. Can be used as verb and noun; e.g. v. "*Huwag mo akong daotin*, busy *ako!*"; e.g. n. "*Ang ingay-ingay mo! Daot ka!*"

Eclipse (for future tense), ***borlog*** (for past, present tense)—also: *eklipanya*—to sleep; e.g. "Night shift *ako* later, *eh. Kailangan kong mag-*eclipse, so next time *na lang.*"

Hale-Bopp—also: *barbero*—fond of making up or exaggerating things; e.g. "'*Tol*, Hale-Bopp *talaga 'yang* Oasis! *Pupunta daw dito, di naman.*"

Jombag—to hit; etymology: from the word "*umbag*"; e.g. "Don't bother me, *jojombagin kita!*"

Kebs—also: care *ko*—I don't care; e.g. "What do you think of the new professor?" "*Kebs!*"

Kimba/kembot—also: *kyeme, charing, chika lang*—usually used in the sense "Joke only" but practically interchangeable with any other word; e.g. "*Sa'n ang kembot natin?* Bored *na ko sa bahay, eh*"; "*Ang ganda mo naman, chika lang!*"

Kyeme—*maarte*; e.g. "*Huwag ka nang makyeme!* Let's go!"

Loia—also: mama, *mamu*, sister, sisterette, *neneng, ning*; a term of endearment for fellow gays; e.g. "Mamu!"

Muk-up—also: *punda, funda*—makeup; e.g. "Give me five minutes, *mag-a-*apply *lang ako ng punda.*"

Ngarag—tired, harassed; e.g. "My work load is horrendous! *Ngarag na ngarag na ako!*"

Red Dragon—from the movie of the same title; dangerous; to get harmed; e.g. "You're too fond of meeting up strangers you encounter in the chatroom. Be careful, *baka ma-*red dragon *ka.*"

Larlar—also: *suba, ziggurat*—cigarette; e.g. "Don't show me any *ziggurat*. I'm trying to quit."

Senadora—KSP (*kulang sa pansin*), *laging nasa eksena*; e.g. "*Si* Gloria *ang daming* photo-op. *Sobrang senadora.*"

Sight—also: *sightchi, sightchina*—to see; e.g. "*Pa-*sight *nga ng bago mong* bag."

Siopopo—also: chapter, chap, *chaka*, chukie—ugly; e.g. "The bouquet my friend bought was super *siopopo!*"

Variables—coins, *barya*; e.g. "Hey, I'll pay you later, okay? I don't have any variables right now. "

Warla—fight; e.g. "Don't go into the room. *Warla-warla ang mga tao diyan sa loob!*"

Wit—also: *witchels*, wiz—no, none; e.g. "*May pera ka pa ba?*" "Wit!"

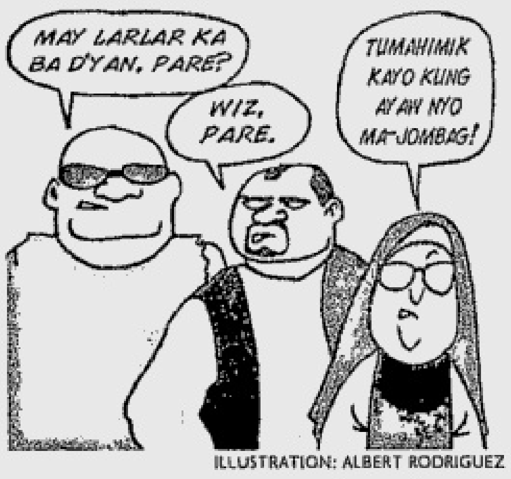
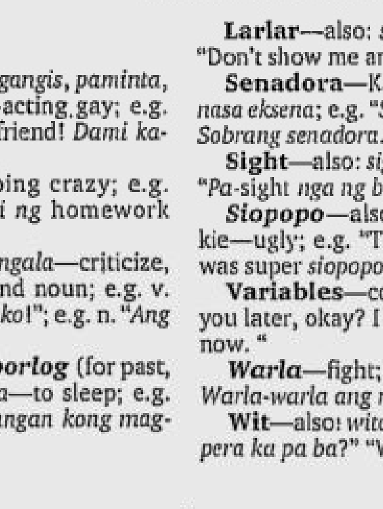

MAY LARLAR KA BA D'YAN, PARE?
WIZ, PARE.
TUMAHIMIK KAYO KUNG AYAW NYO MA-JOMBAG!

ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

Gay-ly read . . .

From page D4

OTHER PICKS



"Closet Queeries"

Composed of 30 essays from J. Neil C. Garcia's column in the late Evening Paper, this book enlightens the inquisitive gay by providing answers to usual questions about homosexuality: Is homosexuality inborn or learned? Was Rizal gay? Are there gay people in the military? How do gay people feel about growing old?

"What if Someone I Know is Gay? Answers to Questions About Gay and Lesbian People," by Eric Marcus

This book is a primer for anyone with a gay person in his/her life. Dealing with the essentials, the chapters are: The Basic Stuff; Friends and Family; Dating, Getting Married, Kids; Sex; God and Religion; School; Activism and Discrimination.

"Tibok: Heartbeat of the Filipino Lesbian," compiled and edited by Anna Leah Sarabia

This anthology is filled with goodies for the Pinay *tibô*: can-relate stories, engaging poetry, witty artworks, plus pictures, interviews and even recipes.

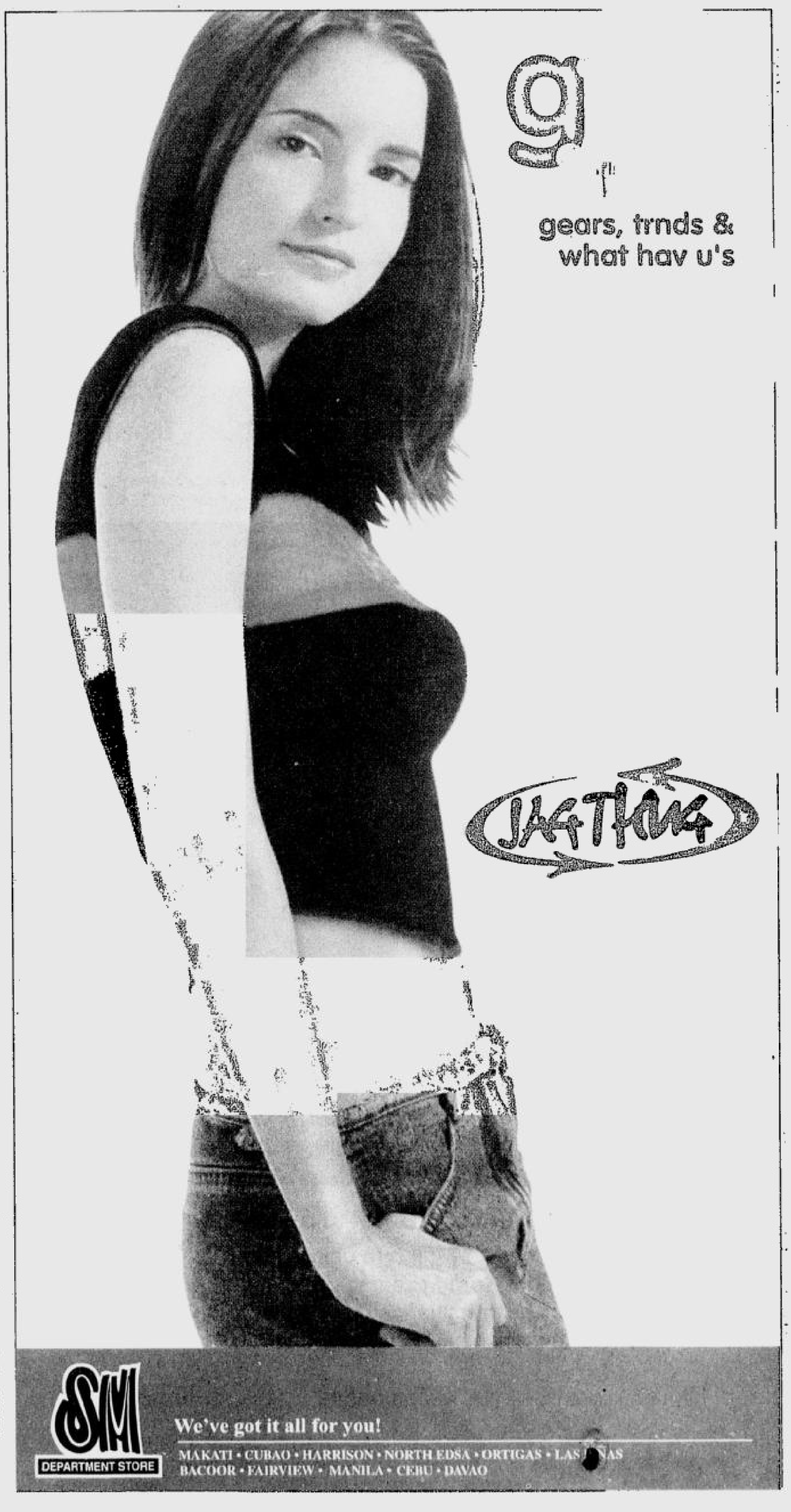
"A Different Love: Being Gay In The Philippines," by Margarita Go Sinco-Holmes

Available in English and Filipino, this book is full of specific gay inquiries and more importantly, straightforward and filling answers, Dr. Margie Holmes-style.

"Ladlad" 1 (and 2)

. This anthology of Philippine gay lit is the best source for enlightenment, inspiration and entertainment. Sometimes campy-funny, sometimes deeply dramatic, everything is definitely worth reading and rereading. Fans anticipate "Ladlad" 3 and hope the series becomes an annual event.

E-mail the author at katotino@yahoo.com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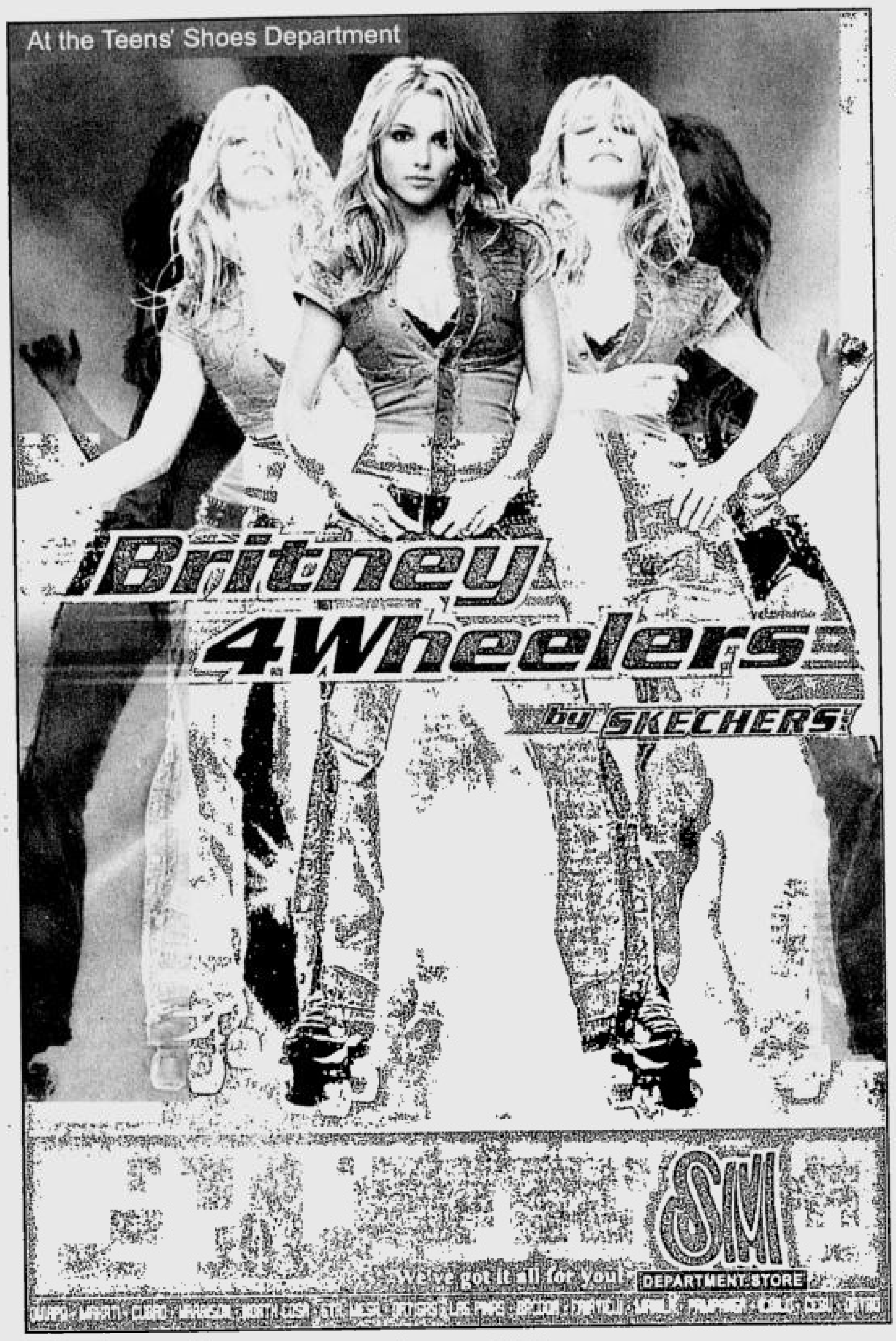
Gay-ly read—some titles for the 'happy' bookworm



By Niño Mark M. Sablan
2bU! Correspondent

THE NOTION that "gay lit" consists only of Playgirl articles, Hot Copy short stories and any book with the words "shaft" or "oral" in it is not entirely true. Of course, some (most? All?) gay men get a huge kick out of reading stimulating pieces but sex is definitely not the only topic they're interested in. Just like the straight ones, they are entitled to enjoy Zafra, Shakespeare or, uhm, Xerex.

Unlike most so-called straights, however, gay people naturally love reading stuff on homosexuality because it is about them. Here's a little list of books that the gay and gay-at-heart may find interesting and enjoyable.

"Bongga Ka 'Day: Pinoy Gay Quotes To Live By," compiled by Ronald Baitan, Ralph Semino Galan and J. Neil C. Garcia

Packed with inspiring poetry bits, hilarious movie lines, excellent excerpts and much, much more from people who matter—gay and straight alike—this handy book of quotations certainly provides enlightenment, entertainment and impressive tidbits one can use as answers in gay beauty pageant Q&A's.

"X-Factor: Tales Outside The Closet," by Danton Remoto

Published five years ago, this collection of essays is an easy, delightful read for gay men, and a very insightful one for straights or those who are just starting to embrace their "queerness." It features stuff most gay men might find very interesting: reviews of both gay and straight plays, books and movies; pieces on prominent people like Ate Guy and Jessica Hagedorn; plus the state of the homosexual nation. Standouts would have to be "Questions for the Heterosexual" and "Was Rizal Gay?," entertaining articles sure to raise plucked eyebrows and elicit hi-hi-hi's.

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"E. LYNN HARRIS'S RICH, THOUGHT PROVOKING, CONTEMPORARY, SEXY STORYTELLING GIVES YOU SO MUCH TO THINK AND TALK ABOUT"
—TINA MCELROY ANSA, AUTHOR OF UGLY WAYS

"Just As I Am," by E. Lynn Harris

This novel tackles homosexuality and a lot more: racism, interfaith marriages, sexual confusion, interracial relationships, bi-straight relationships. The African-American setting might turn some off, but this is what makes the novel fun, contemporary and easy to digest. The characters are so believable you'd want to exchange cell phone numbers with them after you finish the book.

> Gay people naturally love reading stuff on homosexuality because it is about them

"The Best Little Boy in the World," by John Reid

This classic is a must-read for every boy who loves fellow boys. A personal, detailed account of how one discovers his love for the same sex early in life, and how he tells his family and friends about it, this novel is a mini-manual. It shows that a gay doesn't have to dress in drag and that homosexuality doesn't stop one from being the best little boy in the world.

"Seduction and Solitude," by Danton Remoto

A collection of essays, this book is divided into three parts: "Landscapes of Feelings" is a trip down memory lane; "Letters from Britain" is an account of the author's brief stay in the United States and the United Kingdom; "Translating Desire" is an update and a commentary on the Philippine gay scene. Although not entirely gay lit, the third and last part would appeal to the hungry gay bookworm with its gay play reviews, and examples of media gay bashing. Insightful, informative, engaging and funny at times, the book's first two parts are equally good reads.

GAY-LY READ/ p.D3

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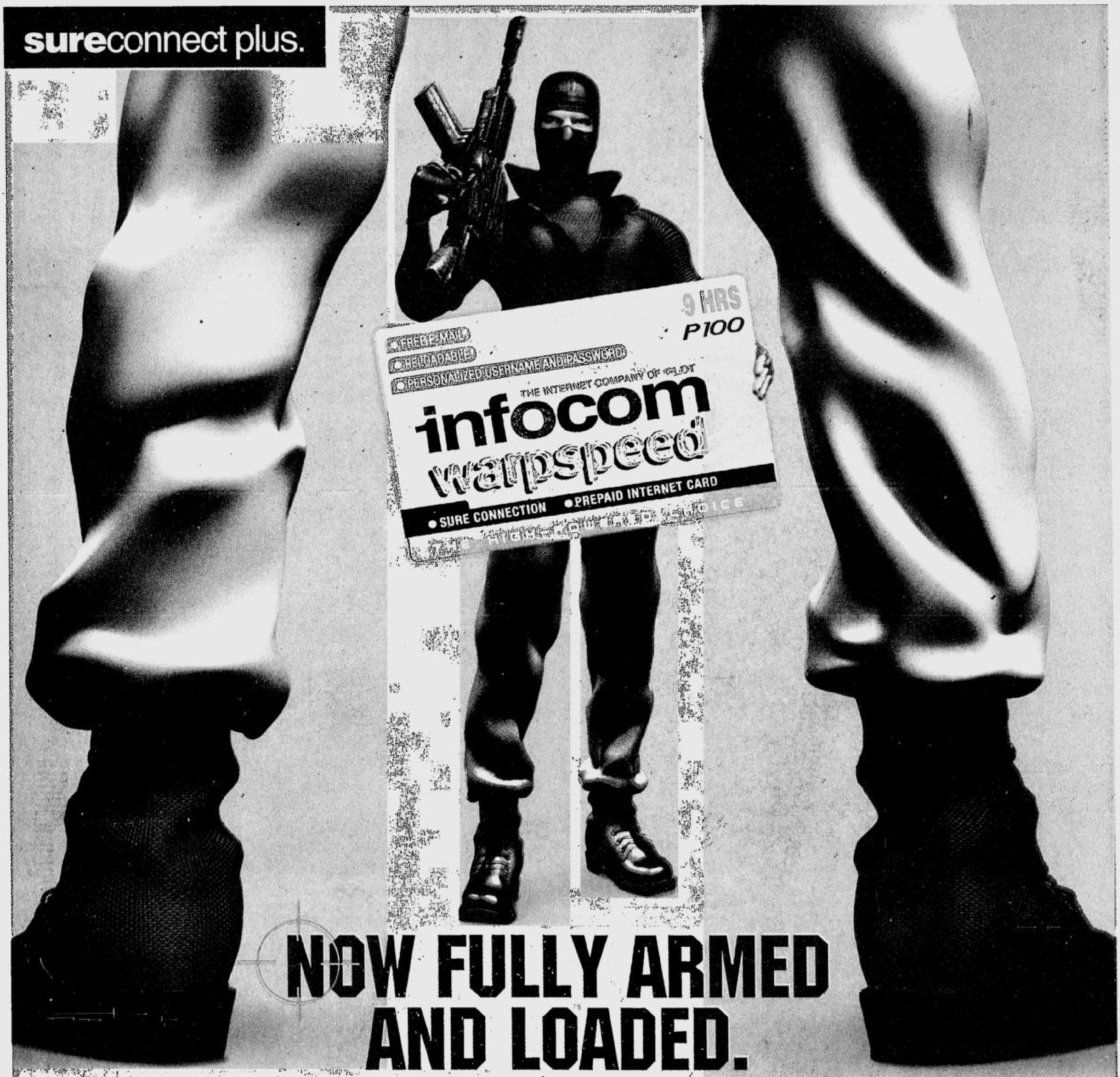
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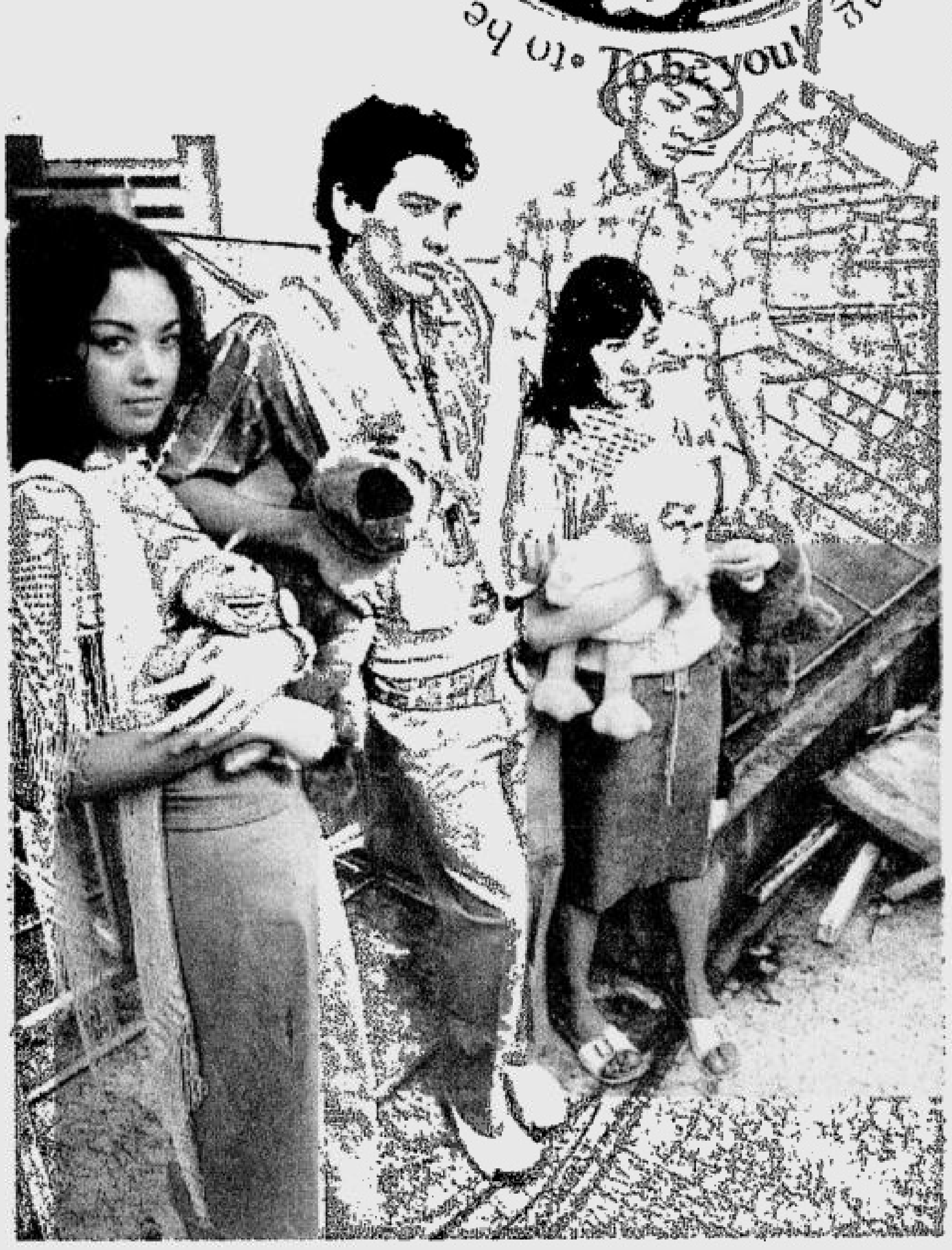


SM VILLE. Angela wears an aqua blue tube top, a caramel brown A-line skirt, a knitted shawl, and clutches a Barney stuffed toy ; Kelly wears a blue checkered polo shirt paired with khaki pants. A yellow top is used as a belt with a Scooby Doo toy; Bianca wears an orange drawstring blouse paired with a blue knee-length skirt and white sandals, buckles and a Big Bird stuffed toy, while Ton wears a beige checkered polo shirt paired with denim pants; shirt used as a belt, a fisherman's hat and a Cookie Monster stuffed toy and Hush Puppies shoes.

PEER PLEASURE. Both guys wear bright floral polo shirts with blue and gold necktie and white pants.

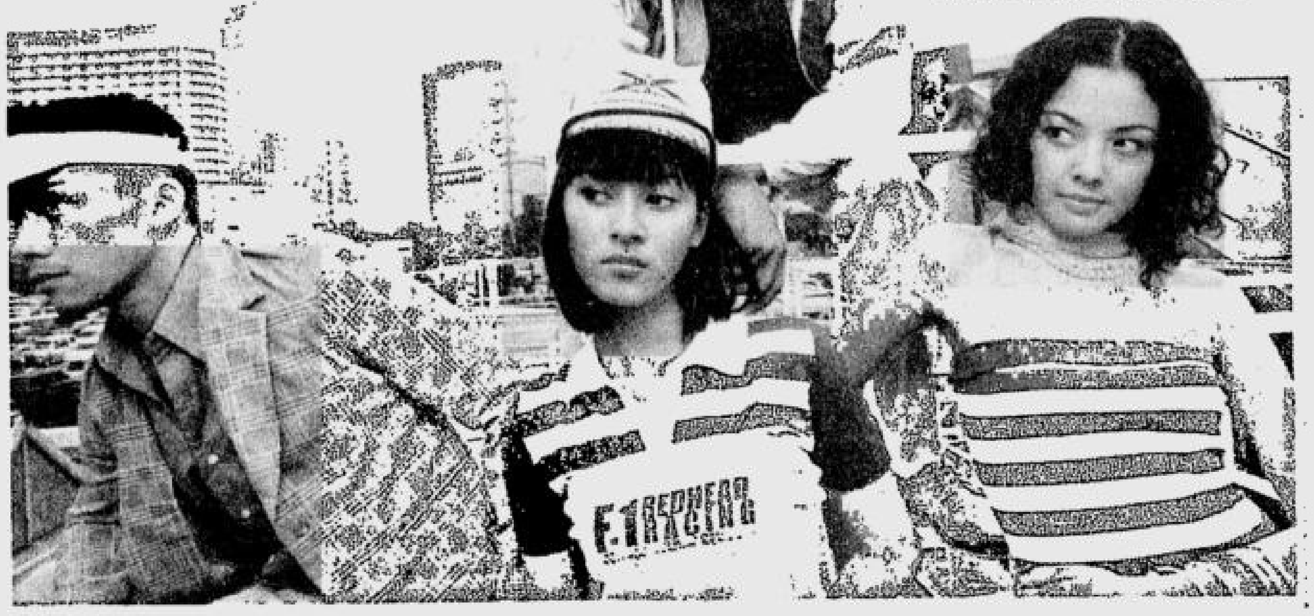
ALL FOR YOU. Ton is wearing an orange sleeveless top with an embossed 34 design and a blue-and-orange checkered polo shirt paired with dark denim pants and white sandals; Bianca wears a red-and-white sleeveless shirt, an orange striped shirt dress and aqua blue thong sandals; Kelly is wearing an abstract colored shirt topped by a maroon sports sweater and a native cap; Angela is wearing a pink-striped collared shirt dress and a white T-shirt with a cartoon design and a white ruffled blouse.

YOUTHFUL STYLES. Ton wears an olive green polo shirt layered with a yellow shirt with cartoon design paired with khaki pants; Bianca wears a sporty yellow and white tee and a white skirt; Angela wears a striped lavender and yellow knitted shirt paired with a ruffled and laced blue skirt; Kelly dons a layering of tops paired with a Deedee stuffed toy pin.

FASHION TRIBE. Bianca wears a pink sports sweater over a white corset tee and a ruffled floral eyelet skirt as belt.

ANGELA wears a pink knitted tube blouse, aqua blue knee-length skirt with a furry pink teddy bear.

CREATIVE DIRECTION: TIM YAP
PHOTOGRAPHY: XANDER ANGELES
MAKEUP: LOWELL BUENAVENTURA
ALL CLOTHES FROM SM DEPARTMENT STORE
ACKNOWLEDGMENT: MILLIE DIZON OF SM PR;
GIFFORD CHU OF HUSH PUPPIES FOR THE SHOES



IN THE LOOP. Ton is in a pink checkered suit and an aqua blue polo shirt paired with khaki pants, and a beige tennis cap; Bianca wears a lavender striped knitted shirt with F1 tube top paired with a white ruffled skirt plus a native cap.

KELLY sports a green shirt and a white and silver jacket paired with khaki pants and a blue sports cap; Angela wears a striped maroon tube top paired with an A-line white skirt.

Cheap yet chic

At SM Department Stores, you may go either subtle or reckless with the style, but never overboard with the charge

WE'VE GOT it all for you!" is a phrase we have all come to associate with retail giant SM Shoemart for ages, and it wasn't until I did this shoot when I realized what it really meant. Now it is confirmed—SM is indeed the secret treasure trove of fashion bargain hunters and frill-seekers this side of the city.

Many times, I would find some sassy party girl and ask where she got that skirt, or that funky hat—"Secret," she would whisper to my ears. Later, after some prodding, she would confess "SM" in a hushed tone, not wanting for other people to hear—not because she was ashamed she got it there, but because she wanted to keep the fashion code all to herself.

I say, be proud of it. Scream to the world at the top of your lungs, "I got this in SM!" Other people squander fortunes on their wardrobe, so when you find a spot on this chic-crazy city,obsessed with brand names and price tags that advocates the total opposite—that is, trendy style and good quality, at a good price at that—grab it with both hands and feet.

Seasoned shopaholic travelers would always say hop on to our Asian neighbors for great fashion finds. Hong Kong, Bangkok, Beijing, Singapore are all good style spots, if you don't mind the travel time, the packing, the unpacking, not to mention the overweight scare and all the other hassles that go with taking a trip. Look no farther—there is always an SM near you. Whether you live in Manila or Pampanga, these malls are a skip, a hop and a jump away from home.

Full survey

The day I did the pullout for the pictorial, I allotted about two hours to scan the store to choose the items. I later realized that it would take an entire day to be able to fully survey the shop—from men's wear to women's wear, teen fashion, and toys—even the *balikbayan* section had ab-fab finds! (I didn't pass by the grocery and appliance section anymore.) Each section transported me into a different world full of diverse possibilities, fashion necessities and frivolities! The visual trip made me salivate to no end, and at more than reasonable prices—printed shirts for P250, scarves for P100, dresses for P350, bangles for P50—it was a fashion lover's dream come true.

The more daring and sophisticated can choose from pink Converse Chuck Taylors, golden Adidas, and Puma originals, to Tan Gan knits, Tonichi Nocum suits, and Goulbourn silks—the choices are endless. I particularly liked the store's teen boys' and girls' division—they had funky shirts in mesh, Harajuku doll prints, college sporty and varsity looks, and more.

Upon the store's closing (yes, I was the last customer there), I saw how orderly the salesmen and ladies lined up and marched to their places like soldiers after battle, wearing badges of honor. For this shoot, I found myself hopping from SM Megamall to SM-Makati to SM-Cubao in a span of three weeks to edit, edit, edit all the stuff I picked from Henry Sy's cabinet.

All game

Then the day of the pictorial came. Models Kelly Davis and Ton Lao of the Fashionista Best Model of the World search, along with Gentxt hipsters Bianca Gonzales and Ala Paredes, were all game. It was a Saturday, a mall-wide midnight sale day, at a time when messages about the terrorist bombings occupied our mobile phones and when security was at its all-time high. We started way later than the agreed call time, so that controversial lensman Xander Angeles had gotten impatient.

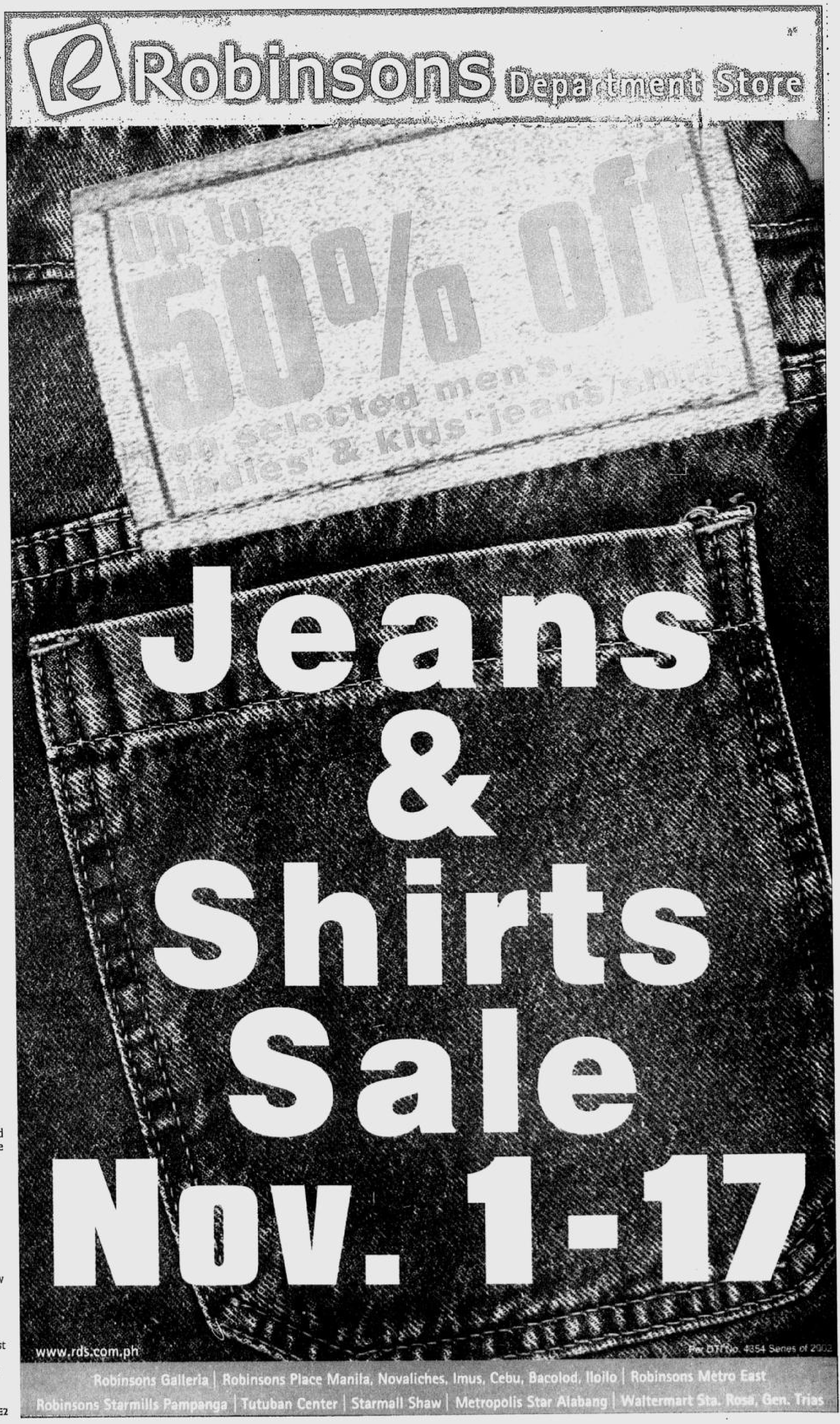
We chose the second floor foyer of SM Megamall as venue—yes, the one where "Happy Halloween" was proudly displayed, where one got an unobstructed view of Edsa. The only thing was, there was no passage to that area, so everything (us, the models, the clothes, bags, toys, etc.) had to be manually elevated via a mechanical lift.

Once there, we just shot and shot and shot. The models all ogled at the clothes and vowed to buy them after the shoot. After the final layout—"It's a wrap!" As we transported the cameras and goods down, it rained hard. Instead of running for cover, SM's Rhea Lamoste and Arlene Castro covered the items with their lives—never mind if they got drenched like teabags in a cup of cold water.

The experience was instructive, even for the Gentxt fashionistas who embody what style is all about: it's not how much, it's how it makes you feel. Whether minimalist or maxed-out vogue, fair or fancy fashion, individual style need not be expensive. Trendy, yes. Pricey, no.

Rain and all, the SM shoot was the closest thing to style nirvana: good fashion at a shockingly good price. Think of SM as your giant closet—you'll never know what to expect.

MORE PHOTOS ON PAGE E2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Sum Insured	P159,411	P637,644	P120,452	P481,808	P91,414	P365,656	P68,950	P172,375	P50,421	P126,053	P36,314	P90,785	P25,541	P63,853

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